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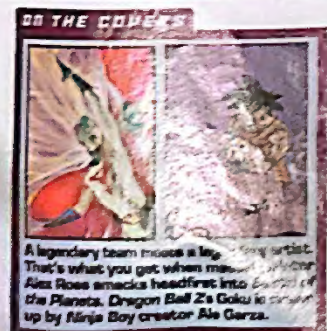
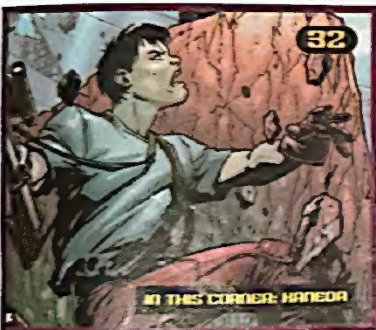


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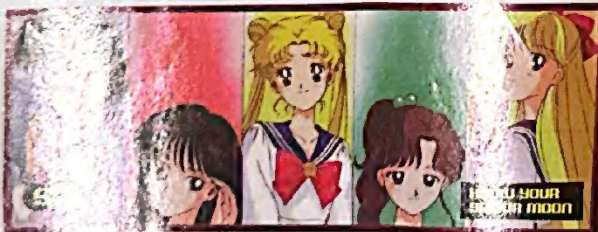
A legendary team makes a long-awaited return. That's what you get when manga artist Alex Ross smacks headfirst into *Dragon Ball Z's* Goku in a fight up by Ninja Boy creator Aie Garza.

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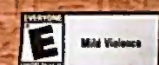
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# FROM THE TOP

WITNESS OUR DEDICATED STAFF!



**SNIP TIRADE** Associate Editor Rob Bricken shows off his Bruce! Katsuro Line tattoo.

It's great time to be alive.

As a longtime otaku, I can tell you things are better now than they've ever been. I remember back in the early '90s, when folks were still using the word "Japanimation" and practically the only anime out were a few Streamline Pictures dubs of *Fist of the North Star* and *Vampire Hunter D* or our worn-out tapes of *Robotech*. Of course, there was always the hope to find a friend of a friend of a friend in Japan who taped *Ranma 1/2* from Fuji TV.

Those times are officially gone. Nowadays, little boys are wearing *Dragon Ball Z* backpacks to school, little girls are playing with *Sailor Moon* dolls and every once in a while, you can see an anime movie in a real movie theater. Video/DVD stores are slowly being taken over by anime, and what merchandise we can't get here, the Internet provides in copious amounts.

And best of all, now we can turn on our TVs and get *Gundam*, *Cowboy Bebop*, *Dragon Ball*, etc. Sure, in yesteryear you may have gotten to catch weird localizations of *Gatchaman*, *Astro Boy*, *Speed Racer*...but now we can finally watch Japan's greatest hits, past and present. The times are good.

But not quite good enough. There's always room for improvement. *Princess Mononoke* only made \$2 million in the U.S. Ouch. *Spirited Away* sold less than 2 come out over here—that's like a knife in our stomach. We need an Anime Channel. These things have to change. We're doing our part at Anime Invasion. We're making yours.

Let

Robert L. Bricken  
Associate Editor, *Anime Invasion*

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# ANIMAIL!

## ACTION... REACTION!

▼ **ANIME INVASION #1** came, it saw, it burrowed into the hearts of anime fans everywhere like some sort of canine infection. Anime fans are a persnickety bunch; they get furious when they feel their favorite pas-time isn't getting the respect it deserves, so the fact that our office is still standing is a good sign.

Anime fans also hate the word "persnickety."

So Anime Invasion marches on! I got a heap of mail filled with kind words, which was reassuring, but there were also plenty of helpful (and some just plain mean!) suggestions on how we can improve the magazine. And that's what I want to see! We're here to entertain, educate and inform you, so you need to get off your butt and tell us what you think!

But anyway, on to the letters...



### HEY A.I. STAFF,

I loved your first issue. Parts of it made me laugh (that pic of Pokémon's James with breasts) and other parts amazed me (all the crap cut out of DBZ).

But I have a question: You mentioned something called "fan service" in regard to Gunsmith Cats. It's also mentioned on the Evangelion tapes. What's that mean?

Also, are you going to be obsessed with monkeys like your parent mags, Wizard and ToyFare?

Jack Johnson  
jtjgundam@hotmail.com

"Fan service" refers to scantily clad characters, gratuitous shower scenes, skirts blowing up, full-on nudity... basically any unnecessary titillation included to make the fans happy. Evangelion was notorious for promising fan service in the previews for upcoming episodes, but instead getting more and more depressing with no fan service in sight.

The original blueprint for Anime Invasion called for maximum monkey madness, but if anyone wants to suggest a substitute obsession, we're all ears.

### DEAR MAGAZINE HOTSHOTS,

First suggestion, cool it with the giant robot thing. Sure, everyone loves them (I'm the only one who doesn't, apparently). But it's all I saw in your first issue. "Yay robots" this, and "Go Robots" that. Less robots.

Second, Hayao Miyazaki is the greatest! Let's see more on him, 'cause he's so cool and everything.

Oh, and I didn't see anything about anime music in the winter issue. But oh well...

Jen Piles  
tikjen@hotmail.com

Less robots, check.  
More Miyazaki, check.  
More music, check.

What if Miyazaki does a robot musical? Are we allowed to cover that? I imagine it being like a much louder, clankier version of Bring In 'Da Noise,

Bring In 'Da Funk.

### DEAR A.I.,

Could you guys just maybe have a little more shōjo stuff in the magazine? Don't get me wrong, the mag's last issue was great! It's just that I think it could have had a few more giant robots and facts about how perverted



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DBZ's Master Roshi really is.

Not that I'm against robots and Roshi (well, yeah...I am against that old pervert)...I just believe that you guys can really reach out to girls more if you do more with Ah! My Goddess and Sailor Moon, etc. I'm not speaking for all girls, because that would just be discrimination. I know plenty of girls who would rather watch an ultraviolent anime as opposed to a lovey-dovey one. But for the girls (and guys) who are into shōjo, you might wanna consider it!

**Caitlin Mannix**  
thepopprincess12@aol.com

First of all, if anyone's guilty of gender discrimination, it's you! We're not all "guys" here at the Anime Invasion office! We've got boatloads of chicks!

Anyway, it's not our goal to cater to guys or girls—we just wanna cover the properties anime fans dig the most, and believe me, Sailor Moon and Ah! My Goddess are definitely on that list.

#### DEAR ANIME INVASION,

Does Pioneer plan to release any new Trigun anime? Maybe more episodes or a movie? I really enjoyed the series and would like to see more of it.

**Ben Hester**  
kingofthe80s@aol.com

You're out of luck, Ben—at least for the moment. "We've released all [the Trigun anime] that's been done," says Chad Kime, Pioneer Entertainment's marketing manager. "They haven't announced plans for any more." However, Chad says Trigun creator Yasuhiro Nightow has been working on a continuation of the manga, which could possibly lead to more anime down the road. Keep your fingers crossed.

#### DEAR ANIME INVASION,

I want to do voice-overs for English-dubbed anime. What's the best way

to break into the field? How do I get a tryout?

**Angel Uschuk**  
Kansas City, MO

Probably no one knows better than Amanda Winn Lee, the American alter-ego of Rei Ayanami from Neon Genesis Evangelion—and director of the recent Evangelion movie dubs—so that's who I asked.

"The best bet is to get a two-minute demo reel together, doing as many different voices as you possibly can," she says. "Send those off to the different companies and studios you're interested in working

## FAN ART

Wanna prove to the anime world just what an artiste you are? Then send us your artwork! Send it snail mail to Anime Invasion, 151 Wells Ave., Congers, NY 10920, or send it the way the brainiacs do, via e-mail at [animeinvasion@aol.com](mailto:animeinvasion@aol.com). All submissions MUST include the character name(s) and YOUR full name and address, including city and state. Got it? Got it? Good!



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## THE FRONT DOOR

Want to know what all these anime fans are talking about? Here's a quick rundown on anime jargon for newbies to keep in mind...

**OTAKU**—oh-TACK-oh! An anime fan. In Japan, it's generally a negative term, but here it's the equivalent of "fanboy."  
**Shojo**—SHOW-jo! An adjective meaning "for girls." Shojo manga, shojo anime, etc.  
**VHS**—Vee-oh-see. VHSs are easy to buy, but VHS has better sound than VHS tapes, with an equivalent picture.  
**DVD or RM**—Original Video Animation. A direct-to-video episode (or episodes) that never aired on TV or went to theaters.  
**Pervert**—PER-oh! It means "pervert," but over here it doubles as "perv."  
**Kawaii**—ka-WAY-ee. It means "cute," but among some anime fans, it often means "this is the only word of Japanese I know."

for." Also, do original voices, not imitations of existing characters, unless they're absolutely perfect.

"In order to do anime, you pretty much have to live in the city where the company is," she adds. "And also, as far as supporting yourself doing anime—there's no such thing. Expect to do a lot of commercial and voice-over work." Apart from that, "lots and lots of acting lessons" are mandatory, she says.

### DEAR ANIME INVASION,

I'm thrilled to see that Viz Video has started releasing the *Ranma* 1/2 episodes on DVD, especially season one's "Digital Dojo." When are they going to release the rest of the seasons?

Also I was wondering when, if at all, the rest of the *Revolutionary Girl Utena* series will get released here in the States?

And finally, I was wondering about one of my favorites, which is *Crying Freeman*. Finding it on video is near

impossible, so why not a DVD treatment of this great series?

Corey Sadler  
cs78@mediaone.net

The entire *Ranma* series on DVD? "That's the plan," says Renee Solberg, Viz's assistant marketing manager. "So far, everything we hear is positive" about *Ranma*'s success on DVD, she says. Trust me, Corey, the entire *Ranma* VHS catalog will end up on DVD before much longer. Solberg also said the price will come down on the VHS version of *Ranma* sometime in early 2002.

Good news—Central Park Media will release episodes 14-26 of *Utena* in the near future.

Bad news—no plans for any *Crying Freeman* DVDs. That's life.

### YO, ANIME INVASION,

I wanted to add my two cents' worth to Matt Greenfield's comments about getting Spriggen booked into theaters ["Tickets, Please," A.I. #1]. Speaking as someone who worked directly on the marketing of the film, it is difficult to get an anime flick into theaters. Right off the bat, we had two things working against us: They didn't have a clue who ADV Films was. Plus, thanks to the colossal failures of *Titan A.E.* and *Final Fantasy*, theaters are a bit gun-shy about running sci-fi-related animated films.

But despite nigh-insurmountable odds, we managed to get Spriggen into more than a dozen different theaters all over the country

(to my knowledge, a record for an anime film, but I could be wrong) with more on the way.

Good luck with the new mag, guys and gals. Keep up the good work.

Corey Henson  
Marketing & Public Relations  
ADV Films

Thanks, Corey! We're all counting on folks like you to pave the way for more anime on U.S. screens. Don't feel pressured or anything.

As for Spriggen setting a record for number of theaters, I think the *Pokémon* folks might disagree. Har har: Just kidding. *Pokémon* was a different beast altogether. A big, yellow, sickeningly cute beast. God, make the pain stop...

IT WAS A TOUGH FIGHT, BUT I FINALLY PARALLEL PARKED!

Whoops! Allow me to slam the door shut on that little mental breakdown and get the hell out of here. Keep the letters coming, folks!

—Tom Root

It took two tubes of Dippy-Do and one lonely weekend, but Tom Root has finally achieved his dream—Goku hair!

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# INVASION NEWS+NOTES

## SOUNDS LIKE ANIME

Your guide to necessary *Otaku* music

**Y**ou've seen the animation—but have you heard it? Once impossible to find or too expensive to import, the orchestral swells and thumping backbeat soundtracks behind anime shows, movies and video games are becoming an art unto themselves. And the best part is, in 2002, you won't have to pay through the nose to hear the music *Alura* banged a drum to.

By eliminating the middle man and creating their own soundtracks just for U.S. release, companies are ready to catapult anime music into American pop culture. AnimateX, (www.animeX.com), formed by Right Stuf and ADV Films, has made its mark by re-releasing out-of-print anime soundtracks, such as *Sin: The Movie* and *Macross Plus*, at regular CD prices.



"It's clear there was a demand," says Right Stuf's President Shawn Kleckner. The results have been very good so far, he says, pointing to the success of hits like the once impossible-to-find *Akira* soundtrack, which costs less than \$15 at AnimateX.

TokyoPop (www.tokyopop.com) has made their mark by creating their own soundtrack albums, rather than importing albums. Working with Squaresoft, they've released a number of *Final Fantasy* "best of" soundtracks in the U.S., compiled exclusively for America. They've also put out CDs for fan-favorite series *Trigun* and *Vampire Princess Miyu*.

After America, Japan has the second largest music market in the world. Both anime soundtracks and J-Pop (a.k.a. Japanese pop music) have long dominated Japan, and are beginning to make a foothold in America.

Of course, with all the anime tunes out there, it'll be years before U.S. companies catch up. If you want an album that hasn't been released domestically, you can check out your local comic store, or hit the web. One of the best import selections on the web is offered by CD Japan (www.cdjapan.co.jp). For more standard fare, try Anime Nation (www.animenation.com) and Planet Anime (www.planetanime.com). But perhaps the best underground site for hard-to-find and out-of-print anime tunes is AnimeJungle.com, which hocks used product culled from their store in Osaka, Japan. ■ Christian Nutt

### AI'S TOP 10 SOUNDTRACKS

1. *Akira*: Original Soundtrack, AnimateX
2.  *Cowboy Bebop*: Original Soundtrack, Victor
3. *The Vision of Escaflowne*, Victor
4. *Blaze* Console Enhancement: 52 Works, Star Child
5. *Breakdown* (G.I. House): *Macross Plus*, Star Child
6. *Macross Plus*, AnimateX
7. *Final Fantasy: 5 Generations*, TokyoPop
8. *Final Fantasy: 11 Generations*, TokyoPop
9. *AKB: Case Files* & *Sound*, Sony
10. *Cherry Crisis*, Polygram



## "OSAMU TEZUKA'S METROPOLIS" THE NEW RELEASE FROM DESTINATION FILMS



"Metropolis is the new milestone in anime. It has beauty, power, mystery, and above all... heart. Images from this film will stay with you forever."

—James Cameron

"Features some of the most incredible art innovations ever seen in anime!"

—Keith Olera, STARLOG

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ANIMATION BY MASAFUMI MINA  
PRODUCTION DESIGNER MASAO MARUYAMA  
EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS IWAD YAMAKI  
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SCREENPLAY BY OSAMU TEZUKA  
DIRECTED BY KATSUHIRO OTOMO  
ANIMATED BY RINTARO

PG-13 PARENTS STRONGLY CAUTIONED  
Some Material May Be Inappropriate for Children Under 13

www.epc.com/tezuka/metropolis

www.anime.com





## BATTLE DAMAGED

## Kaiju Big Battel Weds Giant Monsters and Pro Wrestlin'

**G**iant green lizards. A couple of cyborgs. A mad scientist. A giant can of chicken soup wielding a cleaver.

This is the world of Kaiju Big Bat-tel (misspelling intentional), a celebration of weird Japanese pop culture—specifically kaiju (those big monsters like in *Godzilla* and *Ultraman*), bad Japanese-to-English translations and wrasslin’.

"It's a world of good versus evil, where the score is often settled in the wrestling ring," says David Borders, who runs KBS with his brother Rand.

After creating giant monsters suits for an ill-fated short film in 1995, Borders created *Kaiju Big Battel* as a performance art piece. Now it's a hot draw in its native Boston, consistently selling out 1,000-seat arenas over the past two years.

There are four main teams: The Dr. Cube Posse, led by evil scientist Dr. Cube; Team Space Bug, led by Uchu Chu, the Heroes, mostly led by the Silver Potato, and then the Rogues

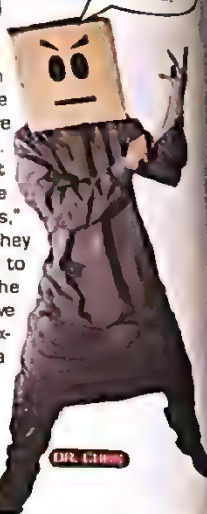


(pronounced "Rogues") of independent kaiju. The kaiju commissioner sets up the fights in an attempt to protect the innocent and preserve cities around the world.

Don't think it's just guys in suits. "These are bonafide, real monsters," stresses Borders. "They always have reasons to fight each other." The action is real, too. If you've never seen a gigantic Mex-

ican stringbean jump off the top of a steel cage, then you haven't lived.

Check out [www.kaiju.com](http://www.kaiju.com) for more info, merchandise and details about their appearance at Wizard World East in Philadelphia this May. ■ **Robert Bracken**



## DEATH OF THE MONTH



where to be found, but the mysterious youth breaks appears out of nowhere in star form. After clumsily catching on, many fans thought that could have happened the planet 10 years ago. Some fans like the air and music great job will build an award, and a film by the director, right? While still in the air, from the two halves of the planet, all of my pieces will come together, and then I will put the pieces with an analogy of what happens in the world. I think, if only John had been a

## RIISING FUN

## What's hot in Japan

**HOT ON TV:** From the producers of *Blue Submarine No. 6*

comes *Vandread The Second Stage*, an inevitable 13-episode sequel to last year's unexpected hit series *Vandread* with more fate-of-the-universe CGI mecha action and alien space babes than you can shake a stick at!

**HOT IN TOYS:** Renewed interest in *Robotech* in the US has led to renewed interest in *Macross* in Japan. Yamato Toys

which previously released *Macross Plus* figures, has finally released a line of fully transformable *Ventus* based on the classic movie, *Macross: Do You Remember Love?*

**NOT IN VIDEO GAMES:** *Seaman*, that prize-winning but dubiously titled game for the soon-to-be-rebred Sega DreamCast gets a second chance at life with a new edition for PlayStation 2. Highly recommended for those who enjoy raising virtual fish with human faces.

**HOT IN THE MOVIES:** *Sakura Wars: The* property, which is famous for mixing images of traditional Japan and Japan's far future, is in the midst of a comeback.

■ Kumar Sivasubramanian



# KUROGANE

## COMMUNICATION

**A STORY ABOUT THE END OF OUR WORLD  
AND THE ONE WHO SURVIVED.**

In the ruins of Japan, Haruka lives with no recollection of what happened to her or her parents. Found by five robots, she finds a new life with them as the last human on Earth. Her only friends are the naive android Spike, the intelligence robot Cleric and the mysterious warrior Angela. They are joined by Trigger, a tiny combat robot, and Reeves, the meanest looking machine ever to wear a trilly pink apron. Together, they protect Haruka from the legions of war robots that are still being produced in automated factories.

**CONTAINS EPISODES 1-8**

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RUNNING TIME: 120 MINUTES



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## INVASION NEWS+NOTES

### WHO NEEDS KEANU? The Matrix Goes Anime

**C**limbing the walls waiting for the sequel to *The Matrix*? Well, some anime greats have something to calm you down.

Recently, the makers of the now-classic sci-fi tale approached several well-known Japanese directors and animators to produce a series of animated shorts based on the world of *The Matrix*, the 1999 film starring Keanu Reeves as an unwitting cyber-Messiah thrust into a dystopian future where machines have risen up to enslave mankind.

"The *Animatrix* will take the world we're in today to the world of *The Matrix* and how we got there," explains Joel Silver, producer of the original film. Plans call for 10 episodes, five of which will be written by *Matrix* creators Andy and Larry Wachowski, with the other five to be created by some of anime's hottest names.

One of the most anticipated pieces will come from the mind of Yoshiaki Kawajiri of Madhouse Studios, who directed the cult classic *Ninja Scroll* as well as the recent *Vampire Hunter D: Bloodlust*. His story is a dark ninja epic that will be rooted within the framework of *The Matrix* mythos. Another story will come from Blue Submarine No. Six director Mahiro Maeda. His installment promises to showcase stunning CG imagery created by the digital wizards at Square (*Final Fantasy: The Spirits Within*) and will act as a prequel to *The Matrix*, providing details on the war between mankind and the machines—and how man eventually lost.

For now, *The Animatrix* is tentatively set to make its debut on the Internet, with the possibility of a DVD that collects them all to follow later. Either way, the first wave of shorts will hit some time this fall and is sure to scratch the itch of fans who can't wait until summer 2003 for the sequel, *The Matrix Reloaded*.



CG BUILD: Early work from Square (Silver and Wachowski's *Matrix*) in the *Animatrix*.

## SPEEDLINES

LITTLE BITTY BUZZ BITE TO CHW ON



### "OH" WHAT A FEELING!

4Kids Entertainment Inc. recently announced that toy giant Mattel is on board to do toys based on the card-wielding glory that is Yu-Gi-Oh. Mattel scored the master toy license to the hot Japanese property, gaining the right to market the toys worldwide (except in Asia) for several years. Fans can look for Mattel's first products later in 2002.

### DIAMOND'S GOTCHA, MAN

Diamond Comics Distributors has got earth-shattering plans for *Gatchaman* (a.k.a. *Battle of the Planets*). DCB will be importing formerly Japanese-exclusive goods like the Madam figures, while sister company Diamond Select Toys is producing an onslaught of all-new action figures, including some 2-inch figures of Mark, Princess and Koyuki.

### ASTRONOMICAL PLANS

*Astro Boy* had the original "anime invasion" in the 1960s, when Osamu Tezuka's imported manga creation became a hit in America. Now, *Astro Boy* is ready to take back the title—the original manga is being printed for the first time in the USA by Dark Horse Comics. The Right Stuff is releasing the original black and white episodes on DVD and there's even a computer-animated feature film planned for 2004 release!

### SPIRITED BOX OFFICE

Now that Hayao Miyazaki's *Son of Ghibli* (or *Kamikazekushi* [*Spirited Away*]) has conquered the Japanese box office, Disney and Dreamworks are battling over the rights to release the animated feature in America. Although recent attempts like *Princess Mononoke* failed at the box office, anticipation is still high that anime will be red-hot in US theaters. —Adam Peltz

### ANI-DOPS!

• Fresh! Yugi by Yu Watase is published by Viz Comics in issue #1.  
• C/Japan's manga website is www.cjapan.com.  
• address was incorrectly presented in issue #1.

AN ANCIENT JAPANESE LEGEND... A VENGEFUL CELESTIAL BEING... A POWER-HUNGRY FAMILY... AND TWO TEENAGE TWINS THAT HOLD THE KEY TO ALL OF THEIR DESTINIES.

# CERES

## Celestial Legend

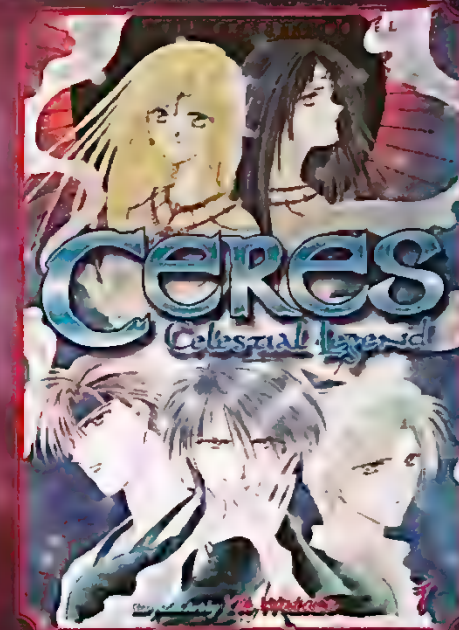
NOW FOLLOW THE SUPERNATURAL THRILLER FROM YU WATASE IN VIDEO OR GRAPHIC NOVEL FORMATS



The Ceres, Celestial Legend series in VHS or DVD format features eight volumes with three episodes in each set. Each DVD also includes a host of extras including interviews with Yu Watase, character profiles, text-less openings and closings, line art and much more!

### Ceres, Celestial Legend: Volume 7 "Requiem"

VHS: stereo, color  
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\$29.95 US



Read the series from the beginning and learn how the average lives of Aya and Aki Mikage are turned upside down—when their 16th birthday party reveals that their family is willing to do anything to prevent a curse that threatens the existence of their family line and fortune, even if it means the family must kill Aya!

Ceres, Celestial Legend: Aya  
Graphic Novel  
black & white, 200 pages  
\$15.95 US and \$29.95 CAN.

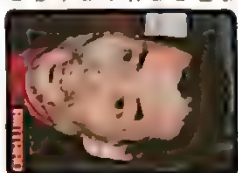
COMING FROM VIZ VIDEO AND VIZ COMICS IN FEBRUARY AND MARCH 2002



# METROPOLIS METROPOLIS

## Metropolis' Rintaro and Maruyama answer to the Invasion

Only working its way across the U.S., director Rintaro and animation producer Masao Maruyama's movie *Metropolis* has been garnering critical acclaim. Not bad for a movie based on a comic created over 50 years ago, even if it was perceived by the "god of manga" and creator of *Astro Boy* Osamu Tezuka. We had a chance to speak with Rintaro-san and Maruyama-san about *Metropolis* and anime.



**Q:** Why did you and screenwriter Katsuhiko Otomo decide to make a movie of *Metropolis*, 50 years after it was created?

**R:** Mr. Otomo and I both decided to do one "daring" project. Making a 50-year old manga into an anime would be a novelty, a new thing. No one ever created animation based on the works Tezuka-san did before *Astro Boy*.

**Q:** How was it hard?

**R:** (laughs) He was a slave driver! What he says today may be very different from what he says tomorrow. He was such a talented man, but he just assumed that other people had the same kind of talent and as much of it—which wasn't true.

**Q:** Both you and Otomo have been known for edgier works like *X/1999* and *Akira*—was there any worry from Japanese audiences about you doing *Metropolis*?

**M:** They were really excited. Japanese audiences had a really favorable response when they heard it was being done—but they were excited more by Rintaro-san and Otomo-san's revival of Tezuka's manga than the movie itself.

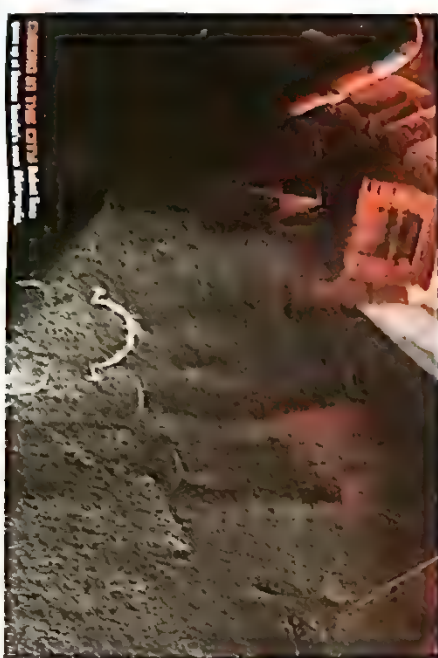
**Q:** What was the hardest part of making *Metropolis*?

**R:** Making *Metropolis*, we challenged two things. One is integrating digital and traditional cel animation techniques; the second is blending that with the old Disney style of animation. That's definitely Tezuka-san would have wanted.

**Q:** Tezuka did many other manga before *Astro Boy*. Why pick *Metropolis* to animate?

**R:** I like science fiction a lot. *Metropolis* is one of the most interesting science fiction works available. It's the kind of style which is very urban, and the robots—well, this type of imaginative work is something I particularly like.

**Q:** How did you decide to visually update it? What did you



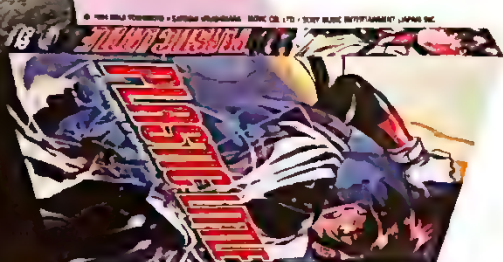
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# You're not going to read this? are you?

You're not going to stare at the picture of Tia and Mei Lin, the spiciest hot stars of ADV FILMS' new *PLASTIC LITTLE* DVD (read where wherever I wanted here and you wouldn't even notice. Use purple money bean paste underwear. Or flying couch double sweet blues. You wouldn't know the difference.

But in the off chance someone is actually reading this, I should mention *PLASTIC LITTLE* is a fun, action-packed anime you won't have to think about too hard to enjoy, filled to the brim with all sorts of sexy babes like these two hot, to the first time ever, *PLASTIC LITTLE* comes with a specially designed JIGGLE COUNTER option, which counts how many times... well, you can figure it out.

SO BUY *PLASTIC LITTLE* ON DVD AND TAKE THESE LADIES HOME WITH YOU!



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# LAST MAN STANDING

A BATTLE YOU THOUGHT YOU'D NEVER SEE

**SPIKE SPIEGEL VS. DIRTY PAIR**



27

AGE

19 (both)

O

BLOOD TYPE

A+ (both)

6'1"

HEIGHT

5'7" (Kei)  
5'6" (Yuri)

Mars

HOME PLANET

Nhioghi (Kei)  
Koucha (Yuri)

Any...please!

FAVORITE FOOD

Chesecake



**SPIKE SPIEGEL:** Reckless and impulsive, Spike Spiegel knows how to hold his own. This crook-turned-interplanetary-bounty-hunter is a master of Bruce Lee's Jeet Kune Do fighting style. He's already died once, and even that couldn't stop him—though he just might starve to death if he and Jet Black, his partner aboard the ship *Bebop*, can't finally earn a few bucks.

**DIRTY PAIR:** The World Welfare & Works Association's (3WA) top agents (or "trouble consultants") are Kei and Yuri, code-named "Lovely Angels"—but better known throughout the universe as "the Dirty Pair" for the path of fiery mayhem and property damage they leave behind. Often their hunger for battle is dwarfed only by their hunger for boyfriends.

## THE BATTLE BEGINS

Spike stamps out his third cigarette and coolly crouches in front of the door, picking the lock with nimble fingers. The door belongs to the hideout of Gam Feenudo, a half-man, half-cat creature who happens to be the most notorious criminal on this entire planet of half-man, half-cat creatures.

A low whistle over his left shoulder is all the warning he receives. Spike springs frantically to one side as the door explodes in a ball of orange flame. His fetid, mangy cat-pelt disguise flutters to the ground.

"Kei! I told you to wait!" A brunette and a redhead wearing—well, almost nothing—step from the shadows. The redhead clutches a smoking cannon bigger than she is.

The redhead rolls her eyes. "Look, Yuri, the cat dude's fine—hey, where'd he go?"

Kei is disarmed with a blindingly fast kick, and another blow sends Yuri's weapon—with Yuri still attached—flying

through the air. A series of rapid-fire punches stagger Kei. She trips over a giant pile of cat litter and lands flat on her rear end.

Spike pauses to light another cigarette. He sees the 3 million woolong bounty—and the badly needed repairs for the *Bebop*—evaporating before his eyes.

A laser blast cleaves his cigarette in two. Spike flips out of the way to avoid the now-recovered Yuri's fire, but he flips right into Kei, who doubles him over with a jackhammer-like punch to the midsection.

"Sorry, pal, this is 3WA business," Yuri says. "And—wow—you're kinda cute!"

"Back off, Yuri!" Kei says, cinching in her choke hold even tighter. "He's mine!"

With one fluid motion, Spike escapes Kei's choke and conks Kei and Yuri's heads together. With a smile, he backpedals away from them.

"That does it!" Kei screams, and pulls the pin on an electron grenade.

"Kei, no!" Yuri yells.

## THE WINNAH:

When the smoke clears, Spike is gone. Kei sits on the rubble and starts beating the ground with her fists. "I hate this planet!" she cries. "Everything smells like cat pee!"

"C'mon, Kei," Yuri says. "Let's go tell the boss the bad news."

Are there any colossal anime match-ups you'd like to see on these pages? Let us know at [AnimeInvasion@aol.com](mailto:AnimeInvasion@aol.com) now!

This battle drawn by PHIL MOY



# BATTLE ON!

BY MATT FALT

**The battle between good and evil gets the darkness and violence it deserves in Alex Ross' new *Battle of the Planets***

**H**eretics is finally going to get to see *Battle of the Planets*. Wait's and all.

If you're an older anime fan, you remember it as the American version of the classic Japanese cartoon *Gatchaman*. And if you're not, you're seriously missing out! But no worries, American super-savior Alex Ross is overseeing an all-new comic book version that's set to be released by Top Cow comics in the summer of 2002.

The series that introduced '70s Saturday morning serial murderers to Japanese animation, *Battle of the Planets* told the story of the G-Force, five strapping young heroes dedicated to fighting evil the only way they knew how: dressed in bird suits. Trained by the shadowy International Science Foundation and packing all sorts of high-tech weaponry, the team was an intergalactic, high-tech winging crew.

Their spunky weapons, transforming vehicles and giant robot eyes blew American audiences away. But we only knew half the story. *Gatchaman* was edgy, dark, and brooding, featuring our heroes' troubled pasts

inter-team tensions and heavily controlled tendencies to mental havoc. When it was brought to the U.S., importers Sandy Frank Productions sanitized the content of the show for American kids, going so far as to introduce totally new characters such as the comical sidekick robot 7-Zark-7 to cover up violent scenes.

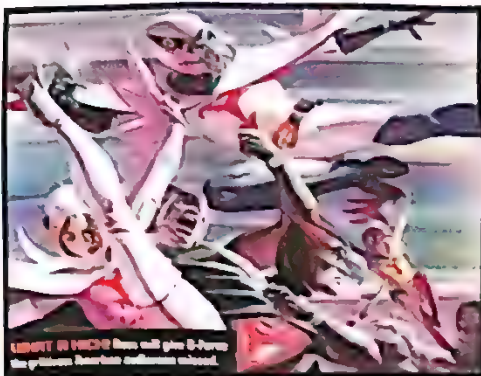
Now with the help of master comic artist Alex Ross—the man behind DC Comics' *Kingdom Come* and the snazzy new Academy Awards poster—American audiences will get a back-pocket version of the gritty story our television parents never let us see.

We're going to pull back the roots and explain the gaps, the holes left by the editors, explains Ross. "Who were these guys? Why are they doing this if they're so young? In comic books, we have more leeway with violence and tone."

Will fans finally see 7-Zark-7 granted the painful death he so richly deserves? Ross is tight-lipped about the specifics, but promises that if he does make an appearance, "he won't be in there as a page-killer to obscure the violence."







## BIRDS ON THE BRAIN

As a longtime fan of the English version, Ross leapt at the opportunity to work on the project.

"I loved the show as a kid because they all had long hair," explained Ross to *Anime Invasion*. "I was a kid growing up in the South, and I had long hair, and that wasn't so encouraged. But basically, in spite of their looks, they're a military unit—an extreme special-forces outfit. And I was delighted by the team aspect."

Old-school fans need not fret about an American fanboy sparking up the works. The classical elements of what made the story so great won't be compromised at all. The heroes will sport their original Japanese names, and shadows of the old stories will be reflected in the new. "The priority will be on maintaining the stylistic flair of the original Japanese series," says Ross. "What I loved about the show was the quality of movement; it was fast and furious, gutsy. And the sense of violence survived even with all the edits in the English version." In short, it'll be the best of both worlds. The comic will feature extended descriptions of the heroes' backgrounds, drawing links between the characters that will smooth out the differences between *Battle of the Planets* and *Gatchaman*.

Ross is aiming for a comic book that closely resembles the look of the old show, sticking with the anime-drenched hard-boiled style of the original. It's a blended look that's somewhat "manga-like" while maintaining the pacing and speed of the animation. Ross will be acting as an editorial and artistic overseer, providing descriptive thumbnails and art guides for the yet-to-be-chosen regular artist to follow. Ross explains that finding the right collaborator for the job has been a time-consuming process. "We want someone who really likes the show, yet has a distinctive style of their own, and that's been difficult."

The first issue hasn't been penned yet, but Ross and Top Cow are tentatively aiming for a summer 2002 release.

## PLANET-WIDE ASSAULT

This year is shaping up to be a veritable paradise for *Battle of the Planets* fans. Not only will a new comic be hitting the shelves, but fans will also see official apparel such as t-shirts and caps from Battle of the Planets, action figures and statues from Diamond Select, and even a CD of the music from the show will see release within the year.

## GOTCHA, MAN!

**WAS BATTLE OF THE PLANETS' THIRD WAVE ANYT' BOMB ANYTIN' HOT?**

*Battle of the Planets* might have been a smash hit here in the States, but the sad fact is that Japanese fans got to see the weird stuff that was really going on. Think we're lying? Just take a gander at some of the differences between *Battle of the Planets* and *Gatchaman*, the Japanese original.

### WITCHES OF DEATH

Arch-villain Borg Kiken, known as "Zelma" in *Battle of the Planets*, turned out to be a bit more than meets the eye in the Japanese version. In fact, he—she?—was actually a...well, we're still not sure. But quite a hermaphrodite, not quite a trans-dresser...we'll let you connect the dots.



### HELL TO THE CHIMP

*Battle of the Planets* fans never got the chance to witness it, but Chief Anderson, the benevolent coordinator of G-Force, was brutally tortured and killed in front of the entire team during a later episode of the Japanese version.

### G.I. JOE

Ja, otherwise known as Jason, reigned as second-in-command of the G-Team. Although *Battle of the Planets* fans saw a little of his dark side, it was only revealed in *Gatchaman* that he suffered from a terrible brain damage as a result of a childhood bomb attack.

### OFF-MENOP

Japan, known as Koppo in American lore, is the youngest of the G-Force team. *Battle of the Planets* portrayed him as a genetic misfit that could barely speak a sentence without starting to wobble like an actual bird. In *Gatchaman*, he was a totally normal kid. (The second thought, maybe Americans got some of the weird stuff, too...) **MA**

For those who just can't get enough of the original cartoon, *Gatchaman*, check out the *Battle of the Planets* DVDs from Rhino. They include two *BOTP* episodes, the corresponding original, uncut Japanese *Gatchaman* episodes and then the second American version of the shows known as *G-Force*.

Phil Oldham, who oversees the *Battle of the Planets* franchise for Sandy Frank Productions, told *Anime Invasion* that his company is "working hard, and having fun, re-launching *Battle of the Planets* all over again."

And while Ross' comic, T-shirts, action figures will be coming out like wild fire, Oldham has an answer for another big question.

"Our expectation is to be back on TV in the '02 and throughout most of the rest of the world, within the next year."

Contributor Matt Alt has his own robotic suit he uses to block out the violent scenes in his life.

THE ARK OF THE APOCALYPSE HAS BEEN UNLEASHED



Every minute is loaded with jaw-dropping animated action that's paced so blister-fast that you want to hit the pause button just to catch your breath.

—Chuck Dixon (Miguel)

"It's a lot of fun." —Chris Claremont (X-treme X-Men)

"...SPRIGGAN was the best, most riveting animated feature I've seen in years."

—Mark Waid (Ruse)

When the fabled Noah's Ark is unearthed in Turkey, it's up to one determined young soldier to keep its awesome power out of the hands of a twisted psychic and his sadistic cyborg master. With the fate of the world hanging in the balance, the boy will have to choose between becoming a man, or an unstoppable killing machine.

It's the End of our world...and the Beginning of the next!

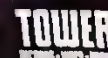
# SPRIGGAN

The anime DVD event of 2002 is coming soon from ADV FILMS



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# ANIME Smackdown!

## The Top 10 GREATEST FIGHTS of All Time!

By Matthew Alt, Robert Bricken and Jonathan Clements

**I**nvading demon armies, deadly samurai vendettas and legions of giant robots all have one thing in common—they're full of open cans of whup-ass!

We don't care if the baddie is a tentacle-waving monster from another dimension, a misunderstood android or even the girl who wouldn't let you copy her homework. We just want to sit in front of our DVD player and watch the good guy pound his (her? its?) face into the dirt.

For that matter, let's have the good guys get their asses kicked also. And we're not just talking about these mini-skirted schoolgirls or expendable hunky foreign dudes. No, this game isn't afraid of sneak attacks or plain old-fashioned dirty fighting in the name of "heroics." Which side is *Devilman* on again? Isn't the heroine of *Blood* supposed to be a vampire? Even the

cute little Pocky Monsters like nothing better than beating the crap out of each other.

The average anime hero is going to lose his planet, get beaten to a pulp, be tempted by the dark side and lead humanity to victory, all in just 13 episodes. The bulk of TV anime episodes guarantee at least one punch-up per show, giving us literally thousands of candidates to pour through to find the 10 best anime fights ever. We saw everything, from the martial arts of *Fist of the North Star* to the badassery of *End of Evangelion*. We've debated the merits of swords versus laser cannons, martial prowess versus psychic powers... even scissors-paper-stone. This is the result: our list of the all-time greatest anime fights.

If you don't agree with us, shoot us an e-mail to say so. Otherwise, sit back, relax and enjoy the blood and guts.

### 10: GIRL ON GIRL

**The Card:** Project A-ko's red-haired superheroine A-ko Magami vs. prissy rich-bogeyman B-ko Daitoku.

**The Battle:** No quest to save the planet here. Rather, it's the electrically named girls A-ko and B-ko of *Project A-ko* jabbing fighting over the non-hebban friendship of the manga's blonde bubblehead, C-ko. It's a delicious catfight, and so many, it starts in the playground.

But the girls don't fight a suit of armor or a school that matches their superhuman strength. And so the battle with A-ko is a simple one: A-ko's solar plasma gun to her throat. B-ko is forced to school. The girls are beautiful, and so the room after class is a beautiful scene.

**The Winner:** A-ko wins with an electric whip. B-ko is sent to the floor. It's a much more peaceful

super-bebe, who runs for town with B-ko's rockets, demolishing everything behind her! Blinded by amazonian fury, the girls tear through the streets, destroying buildings and traffic, oblivious to the 4-mile-long alien mothership launching an all-out invasion. That's right—they're tearing into each other so much that they don't notice the alien invasion right around them!

Well, A-ko does notice a tank to throw at B-ko (sweet move), but before they know it, C-ko is kidnapped by the aliens, who believe her to be their long-lost princess! Whatever—the girls are forced to call a truce, squabble and rescue their friend.

**The Winner:** It's a draw, but B-ko is waving outside the school gates for a rematch the next day. Catch it: *Project A-ko* is available on VHS (\$24.95) and DVD (\$26.99) from Central Park Media.





# nine



## 9: SCOUTS DIS-HONOUR

**The Good:** Sailor Moon's five Sailor Scouts vs. the evil Queen Beryl and her henchies.

**The Bad:** Straight from the Negaverse with a hatred for girls in sailor suits, Queen Beryl's out to wreck the Earth with her evil machinery. Through her fleet and hench army of Sailor Scouts to stop her, Sailor Moon (Sailor Moon), Mercury, Venus, and Mars.

**Good:** Sailor Moon, the North Pole, the Scouts are in a fight for the world, but they're not the only ones as the evil forces are out to face them. The Scouts and Gloom Girls are in a fight. Yikes! Well, not to worry you up like that. Jupiter is out to help you, but the death of the Scouts is a tragedy. Jupiter is out to help you, but the death of the Scouts is a tragedy. Jupiter is out to help you, but the death of the Scouts is a tragedy.

kill a Gloom Girl and herself; Sailor Mars dies, killing the last of the bad girls in a vicious fight. Yikes again!

With her friends dead, Serena's a nervous wreck in time for the ultimate agony—in Beryl's lab, boyfriend Darien has turned to the dark side! Okay, Serena's love brings him back, but then Darien dies, shielding her from Beryl's attack. Serena's utter devastation calls her friends' power from beyond the grave, and Beryl is blasted back to the Negaverse by their combined energy. **The Winner:** As the last one standing, she wins the trophy for Good.

**Good:** Sailor Moon: Good Queen Beryl is available from Toon-Time Video on VHS (\$19.95), but the unedited version showing this battle is only available in Japanese from Toei Video (good luck).

## 8: HOLY CROW

**The Good:** Evangelion's Unit 01 (piloted by Shinji Ikari) vs. invading Angel Zeruel.

**The Battle:** Zeruel is the 14th unstoppable war-angel sent to retrieve the entity known as Adam from NERV's headquarters. If it succeeds, it's the end of the world! Smashing into the complex, Zeruel's about to get what it wants when Shinji (in Evangelion Unit 01) tears through the wall and floors it with a punch to the jaw! Woo hoo!

Shinji is furious that he's saving his NERV-leader dad, who abandoned him as a child, and is ready to kick some ass. Zeruel slices off Unit 01's arm, but Shinji brings the battle outside. Out in the open, the raging Shinji tries to tear out Zeruel's heart, but suddenly runs out

of power. Zeruel grabs Unit 01 by the head and swings it into a hillside, tearing open its breastplate with a fountain of blood. Game over, we're all gonna die!

But wait! Shinji's EVA Unit isn't a robot—it's a vicious living predator barely contained by man-made restraints, and the damage has just set it free. Roaring in berserk rage, it grabs Zeruel and takes a bite out of its torn, quivering flesh. As the onlookers gasp in horror, it starts to feed, with its pilot, Shinji, trapped inside!

**The Winner:** We're calling this one a double forfeit, since Unit 01 is disqualified for eating its opponent. **Good:** The eating contest went down in Evangelion DVD Collection #16 from AD Vision (\$29.98), or Genesis O-10 on VHS (\$29.95 sub, \$24.95 dub).



# eight







five



### 5: RYU & KEN'S BIG FINALE

Street Fighter 2's devoted muscle-couple Ryu and Ken vs. plighted, leather-lover M. Bison.

M. Bison's scheme to build an army based on Ryu's abilities just fell apart. All he has left is Ken, whom he's been mind-controlling. Ryu wants his friend back, there's a lot of anger in there.

Tracking Ryu to the mountains of Thailand, Bison finds the captive Ken on the other side of the mountain. Ryu's path to revenge is clear. But this time, Bison throws his hands up with an electrified fist. A supersonic punch from the sky sends Ryu flying.

Ken's not so sure that his fall was a good thing. Bison looks at him [the poor guy] and continues

Bison begin grappling with each other, refusing to budge in the struggle of both their lives! Ken comes to and tries to dislodge Bison with a double-kick, but Bison grabs him in a headlock and smashes his head into the ground. Bison's punches then come so fast that they can only be seen on slow-mo, but Bison grabs his head and smashes him again. Bison is wounded for the first time.

Ken and Ryu step back and look at each other's eyes, realizing they are together again. A new Hado-ken energy bolts, driving Bison back into the airplane, which he conveniently explodes. Boom! The Winner: Ryu and Ken, together. Crunch! Street Fighter 2: The Anniversary Edition is available from Manga Entertainment on DVD (1998) and (1999) (\$14.98).

### 4: POP MUSIC MAYHEM

The Dora: Robotachi's beleaguered crew of the SDF-1 Macross vs. the repulsively large Zentradi.

The Battle: The first decade of the new millennium ends on a sour note when a heavily armed fleet of Zentradi war ships descends on Earth in 2008. Fleet Commander Breetai immediately begins an all-out attack to recover the mysterious Super Dimensional Fortress Macross, a crashed alien relic recovered and rebuilt by Earth's military. Although Breetai eventually signs a peace treaty, his unmused Supreme Commander Dolza decides to settle the score personally with some 4 million Zentradi battleships. Uh oh.

With Earth surrounded by an uncountable number of enemy ships, things are looking grim. But the humans have an enormous, top-secret underground laser weapon called the Grand Cannon in Alaska, and the military uses

it to sweep the sky with a Zentradi-roasting beam of death. When the remainder of Dolza's fleet strikes back and annihilates the Grand Cannon and nearly every human living on Earth's surface, the crew of the SDF-1 gets even by, uh, broadcasting footage of teen cubs Lynn Minmei and her horrible pop songs. Go get 'em!

Backed by Breetai's renegade ships, the SDF-1 launches an all-out kamikaze attack against the now-demoralized main Zentradi fleet, using hundreds of transforming Valkyrie fighters and missile-equipped Destroids to give Dolza the comeuppance he so richly deserves.

The Winner: The SDF-1 crew successfully defeats the fleet that just killed off most of humanity. Yay. DVD: ADV Films' Robotachi DVD collection 3 wraps up the end of the Macross Saga for \$44.98.



tho



# three



## 3: USE YOUR HEAD!

Ninja Scroll's ninja Jubei vs. evil, superhuman slugger Genma

Genma faces Jubei in the hold of a burning galleon set of gold to fund an army to conquer Japan. Jubei is paired—his girlfriend just died, and it was Genma's fault. But the tale isn't mutual. "This deal took years for Genma to set up, and he's pissed. Someone's gotta die."

Jubei says Genma's good, and a blade that can cut through anything. Genma replies, "I'll see you again, and I'll see you again until the bones of my body are scattered to the winds."

Genma then kills the crippled Jubei, who is still alive. Jubei then turns, beats his opponent, and kills him. Jubei then tells Jubei about his past. Jubei then tells Jubei how good Jubei is. Genma then tells

heal almost instantly. Jubei doesn't stand a chance.

Or does he? Using his Bit of String technique, Jubei winches his sword into his other hand, and as Genma prepares a killing blow, he slices off Genma's arm. But Genma simply kicks Jubei to the floor and reattaches it. Jubei then headbutts him 15 times until Genma's head is a bloody pulp, stabs him in the stomach and gutters him. A full Genma starts to come together once more, but it is washed into a tide of molten gold, which hurls him into the sea bed. This should do it.

The Winner: The Tokugawa Shogunate. Jubei went to rule Japan unopposed until 1853.

Genma for Ninja Scroll is available in Japanese Edition on DVD (\$29.95) and VHS (\$24.99) and \$24.99 sub.



# two

## 2: EARTH MUST DIE

The Card: Gundam's moody robot-whiz Amuro Ray vs. Zeon army pilot Cher Aznable, "The Red Comet"

The Battle: Amuro and Cher never did get along particularly well. They fought on opposite sides of the One Year War and even managed to fall in love with the same woman. Their feud came to a head with her accidental death 15 years ago. Now, it's payback time.

Cher has founded a new organization called the Neo Zeon and plans to drop several huge asteroids onto Earth's surface from orbit. An enraged Amuro rises to the challenge, taking the reins of the Earth Federation's newest, prototype Mobile Suit, Nu-Gundam, equipped with cutting-edge "Psycho-Frame" technology that lets him command a payload of mini-weapons with mind power.

However, Cher has a similar mech called Sazabi, and the two battle it out in low Earth orbit as the asteroids begin to fall.

Amuro's comrades manage to detonate one of the asteroids just as Amuro gets the upper hand in the giant-robot battle, forcing Cher to eject from his crippled Sazabi. But one of the killer space rocks continues its descent. In a last-ditch effort to save the planet, Amuro takes hold of the meteor and uses Nu-Gundam's Psycho-Frame to amplify his psychic ability, gradually deflecting the rock from Earth's surface.

The Winner: Amuro saved the day, saved the Earth and kicked some ass.

Catch It: Pick up Gundam: Cher's Counterattack later this year from Bandai Entertainment.



# one



## 1. THE BATTLE RESUMES!

Dragon Ball Z's recently resuscitated Goku vs. the prince of all Saiyans, Vegeta.

When the last Saiyan came to Earth, Goku had to sacrifice himself to save the world. Now, two new, more powerful Saiyans have arrived—and they're a wild team. The Ginyu Force, named back after the afterlife to save the world from destruction. What's more, he finds himself in a battle with the most powerful Saiyan in the world.

Dragon Ball Z's Goku is the most powerful Saiyan in the world. He's the only one who can defeat the most powerful Saiyan in the world. He's the only one who can defeat the most powerful Saiyan in the world. He's the only one who can defeat the most powerful Saiyan in the world.

cannot be defeated—and Vegeta transforms into Oozaru (giant monkey) form and begins threatening Goku, until their friend Yajirobe sneaks up behind him and cuts off his tail, reverting him to normal. Damn, we love monkeys.

But Vegeta still fights on, even without his powerful Spirit Bomb technique—until finally, he's thrown helpless on the ground. But seeing his father's power, Goku's 4-year-old son, Gohan, suddenly grows up, turning Oozaru and stomping Vegeta like a bug.

The Winner: Gohan beats Vegeta, but Vegeta is still a threat of being a threat.

Catch it: To catch the best of the series, check out the incredible season 4 of DBZ, picking up where "Showdown" from Pioneer/Funimation left off (\$9.98) or DVD (\$14.98).

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BY TOM REOOT

# 10 REASON WHY YOU SHOULD WATCH LUPIN THE 3RD

ANIME INVASION  
EXPLAINS WHY YOU'LL  
LOVE MASTER ANIME  
CRIMINAL LUPIN III

**T**he world's greatest thief finally has his eyes set on America. His name is Lupin the 3rd. He's pilfered from the Titanic. His schemes have toppled rulers. He even once stole the Statue of Liberty.

In the real world, his exploits are no less legendary. This guy's been around and consistently popular in Japan for 35 years. He's conquered manga, television, video games and movies.

And now he's on his way to America. Courtesy of FUNimation, the folks responsible for bringing us DBZ, come 10 movies on DVD starring the gentleman thief supreme this April. Nobody's wallet is safe.

Looking for a reason to turn your valuables over to the greatest thief anime has ever known? Then read on! By the time you're finished, we guarantee: Lupin will be on your Most Wanted list, too.

**EVAN STEVEN SPIELBERG THINKS LUPIN KICKS ASS!**

Just how far-reaching is Lupin's appeal? A young Steven Spielberg himself saw the Lupin movie *Castle of Cagliostro* (actually the second Lupin flick) at the Cannes Film Festival in 1979 and proclaimed it one of the greatest adventure movies of all time. And you can probably trust that Spielberg guy on such a subject.

*Castle of Cagliostro* (currently out on DVD from Manga Entertainment) is often cited as one of the greatest anime films ever; fans and critics alike both here and in Japan. And it's no wonder. It





was the work of legendary anime director Hayao Miyazaki—you know, the fella who went on to put out masterpieces like *My Neighbor Totoro*, *Kiki's Delivery Service* and *Princess Mononoke*. Oh, and his latest anime film, *Spirited Away*, is not only the highest-grossing Japanese film of all time, but the highest-grossing non-American produced film in the world.

## OUR GANG

LUPIN III: THE WORLD'S GREATEST THIEF IS BACK! (And he's got a new crew.)



**LUPIN III:** The world's greatest thief is the protagonist of the famous anime. He's a handsome, charming, and incredibly smart thief who's always on the move. He's got a new crew, and he's got a new mission: to steal the world's most valuable treasures.



**JIGEN:** The eternally hit-meeting Jigen is an experienced marksman, and Lupin's cohort in crime. In fact, the love of his ever-present, face-obscuring fedora adds to his quick-draw timing. He's got a new mission: to steal the world's most valuable treasures.



**GOEMON ISHIKAWA:** Lupin's other partner, Goemon is a classic samurai with little patience for Lupin's misadventures. Goemon's membership is on a par with Jigen's, and he's got a new mission: to steal the world's most valuable treasures.



**FUJIKO MINE:** Most of the fun appeal of the anime comes from the romance. Fujiko Mine is a play on Japan's famous Mt. Fuji, and her mysterious personality is a great asset. She's got a new mission: to steal the world's most valuable treasures.



**INSPECTOR ZENIGATA:** The world's greatest thief is always on the move. He's got a new mission: to steal the world's most valuable treasures.

So where exactly does *Lupin* fit in? Well, *Lupin* launched Miyazaki's career. He got his start in TV animation, and co-directed 17 episodes of the first *Lupin III* TV series in 1971, and two more episodes post-*Cagliostro* in *Lupin III*'s second TV series in 1980. It was *Cagliostro*'s incredible popularity and acclaim that allowed him to start Ghibli, his own anime studio, where he's been churning out more anime hits ever since.

## LUPIN'S GANG STOLE THE HEART OF JAPAN

Lupin and his motley crew of thieves (see sidebar) have enraptured Japanese audiences for nearly 35 years. As proof of Lupin's enduring popularity, FUNimation president Gen Fukunaga points to a recent "Anime Best 100" poll conducted by Japanese TV channel Animax in a partnership with men's magazine *Brutus* and the video rental chain Tsutaya. Not only did *Lupin III* come in second place for "Best All-Time Anime" (right behind *Gundam*), the master thief also nabbed second place in the "Most Popular Character Ever" poll, behind only Doraemon, the robotic cat—practically the Mickey Mouse of Japan. Not too shabby, considering Lupin beat out *Gundam*'s Amuro Ray, *Dragon Ball Z*'s Goku and Sailor Moon.

Why is Lupin so incredibly popular in Japan? Because of the characters, man! Every *Lupin* movie and manga has the same cast of five enduring characters—four master criminals and the determined (and eternally thwarted) cop who's sworn to bring them down.



IT'S IN THE NAME: There's nothing you possess that Lupin can't take away, but the Twilight Gem.

## THINK GUNDAM IS HUGE? FORGET IT—LUPIN'S BIGGER

*Lupin*'s done more than just challenge *Gundam* for Japan's popularity, it's beaten *Gundam* in quantity! Think the decades-spanning tapestry of *Gundam* anime is overwhelming? Well, you ain't seen nothing yet. Since 1969, *Lupin* has appeared in three TV shows, for 228 episodes. As you *Gundam* freaks are well aware, that incredible figure is still less than the total number of *Gundam* episodes—however, there have been eight theatrically released *Lupin* films and 13 TV movies as well, an amount that easily puts *Gundam* to shame.

And the *Lupin* franchise is still going strong. "It's still extremely popular in Japan," Fukunaga says. "They continue to make new movies every single year. Recent movie airings have done over a 20 rating, which are Super Bowl-type numbers!"

In fact, something *Lupin*—whether it's been manga, a television series, or a theatrical or TV movie—has been produced almost continuously since the first manga was created back in 1967.

## LUPIN RIVALS POKÉMON FOR GOODIES!

All the shows and movies are hardly the tip of the iceberg—there's more *Lupin* merchandise out there than any one person can ever hope to accumulate, even if you did get every single Pokémon pocket protector!

If you've got anime-lovin' friends, chances are they've already got some *Lupin* luxuries, since it's been a big hit with U.S. anime fans for years. "We try to stock whatever *Lupin* merchandise we can," says Peter Kato, assistant manager at New York City's Toy Tokyo store. "It really is popular. It does well not just with Japanese customers, but with Western customers, too."

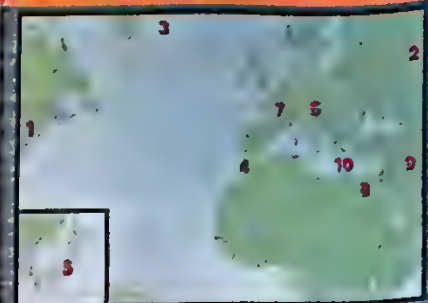
A colossal amount of toys have come out over the years, including action figures in every scale, from 12-inch dolls in cloth costumes to 3 3/4-inch Star Wars-sized figures.

Dozens of *Lupin* soundtrack CDs have been issued; just when you think you have 'em all, a new one pops up. The *Lupin* theme has been remixed just about every way imaginable, including some awfully trippy dance tracks.

Just about every video game platform ever made—from Nintendo to Sega to Sony—has a *Lupin III* game of some sort available for it. Heck, we've counted more than 20 so far.

There's tons of *Lupin* stuff on ebay.com, and you'd be hard-pressed to find an anime store worth a damn that doesn't carry some *Lupin* stuff. Toys, well scrolls, soundtracks—

## WHERE IN THE WORLD IS LUPIN?



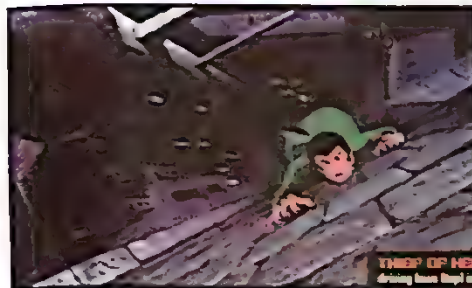
Lupin's a worldwide force of criminal nature, baby. Here's just a handful of the places this globe-trotting thief has made a huge splash.

1. **New York:** The Statue of Liberty is missing! Within the statue is a diamond, and if a group of Satimats get it, they'll start a World War! Crim, Lupin, we'd kinda like that statue back. (*Bye Bye Liberty Crisis*)
2. **Russia:** Rasputin lives! But it made no difference to Lupin, who thwarted the ancient ruler in a bid for his lost treasure of the Romanov dynasty. (*From Russia With Love*)
3. **North Atlantic:** Even the wreck of the Titanic isn't safe from Lupin, as he claims a statue called the "Dragon of Blood" that sank aboard the vessel. (*Myopia of Blood*)
4. **Morocco:** A legendary channel called the Twilight holds the key to helping a persecuted people called the Galts rise up against their oppressors, fortune and justice building—Lupin's two birds with one stone. Lupin! This is the first *Lupin* movie (Lifetime plans to release). (*Twilight Gem*)
5. **Tokyo:** The treasure of the Takayama Shogunate is the target of our enterprising thief, and if he destroys an entire theme park in the process, that's the break! (*Missing Memory: Tokyo Crisis*)
6. **Cagliostro:** The world's smallest country gets its royal wedding interrupted—and its leader, oh, deceased—thanks to Lupin's interference. This flick is currently out on DVD from Manga Entertainment. (*The Castle of Cagliostro*)
7. **France:** A grand prix is the site of Lupin's quest to regain a treasured family possession: Napoleon's dictionary. Well...what the hell? (*Lupin's Dictionary*)
8. **Egypt:** What does Lupin do with the "Pharaoh's Stone," one of Egypt's great national treasures? Gives it to Fujiko in exchange for a date. Oh, Lupin... (*Mystery of Almas*)
9. **Ancient Babylon:** Lupin seeks the legendary Gold of Babylon, and crosses swords here with the New York Mafia. When the Supremes are branching out... (*The Gold of Babylon*)
10. **Zafu:** In the fascist island country of Zafu, Lupin seeks the treasure of the deposed ruler. Is the secret in getting it his young, beautiful daughter? What do you think? (*Dead or Alive*)



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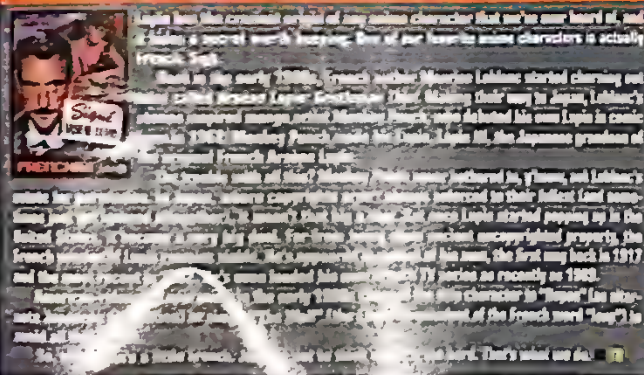
**THE GUYS BEHIND DRAGON BALL Z KNOW IT'LL BE A HIT**  
How certain is FUNimation—the company that made *Dragon Ball Z* a blast in America—of Lupin's success? So certain that the company snapped up every Lupin movie Japan's NTV was willing to license it. "The characters are really endearing," says Fukunaga. "They're just fun to watch. Lupin



**THIRD OF HEARTS** Lupin and Jigen (right) have been chasing each other since the beginning, but Lupin will do anything for a pretty face.

## FORGET IT, HE'S FRENCH

**THE ULTIMATE LUPIN'S FIGHTING YOUR SOCIETY**



is clearly one of the top brands that has done well for quite some time. It seemed like an obvious choice."

The Lupin invasion will begin in April, when *Twilight Gemini* hits stores. *Twilight Gemini* takes Lupin and his gang to Morocco, after a dying thief gives Lupin half a diamond, which he says will unlock a mysterious treasure of a people called the Gelfs. Of course, the police are hot on Lupin's trail, he gets caught between the Moroccan army and Gelf separatists, and a beautiful girl hides the other half of the diamond. It's all topped off with a few brilliant nods to *Casablanca*.

The other movies due to be released are *Voyage to Danger*, *Dragon of Doom*, *Pursuit of Harimeo's Treasures*, *Forever to Nostredamus*, *Dead or Alive*, *Crisis in Tokyo*, *The Columbus Files*, *Missed by a Dollar* and the much-lauded *Island of Assassins*. After *Twilight Gemini*, they'll be released every five or six months. FUNimation is definitely dubbing them for American release but is unsure about other details. But if the company follows its very successful *DBZ* DVD formula, it'll release cut and uncut versions of each title—the uncut will most likely contain the original Japanese language track.

## MORE APPEALING ACTION AND INTRIGUE THAN JAMES BOND?

Lupin even out-Bonds James Bond himself when it comes to action, intrigue and all-around coolness. Bond might have the better luck with the ladies, but Lupin's flicks range from Tokyo to Paris to Ancient Babylon, with bad guys always chasing after him even more so than the police. Not to mention Lupin's gadgets: from hover-cars to belt-buckle grappling hooks to stuff we can't even describe because it's too crazy for words (that pyramid-infiltrating construction from *Mystery of Mamo* comes to mind).

The reason for Lupin's incredible popularity in Japan is because it covers so many genres. While many of the *Lupin* stories are good, old-fashioned heist films, the series has been known to swerve into the realms of science fiction, fantasy and, believe it or not, theology. *Lupin* installments like *Walther P-38* can be intensely gritty and violent, while *Bye Bye Liberty* verges on hysterical.

Add up all the action, intrigue, adventure and hilarity, and you've got an anime series unlike any other. Lupin's been on our Most Wanted list for years. He should be on yours too.

Come this April, we'll all be able to nab him.

Michigan-based writer Tom Root stole a kitten once, then raised it with love. He's a thief with a heart of gold.

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REVEAL WHAT'S NEXT!

ON SALE IN MARCH

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# DARK SIDE of the MOON

50 'Sailor Moon' secrets American TV producers didn't want you to know!

**S**ailor Moon's a goody-goody...right? Well, that's only because fans who've watched *Sailor Moon* on American TV never got the whole picture! Nudity, excessive violence and raunchy humor might be acceptable for Japanese audiences of all ages, but all that juicy stuff got snipped out over here.

So what exactly have we missed? Apparently, quite a lot! But don't worry; we'll fill you in. Just note that all episode numbers listed below refer to the Japanese episodes. Now, go grab some potato chips (octopus-flavored, for you otaku!) and find out!

**1. PLEASED TO MEETCHU!** In the English version of *Sailor Moon*, the opening theme song was changed and catchy lyrics were added. Jupiter and Venus weren't even seen in the opening titles until episode #27 in Japan.

**2. FACT OR FICTION?** Originally, Sailor V was a real person—kids chatter about Sailor V catching crooks and stopping crime sprees. In the U.S. version, however, Sailor V is just a video game and TV character.

**3. YOUTH GONE WILD** In episode #2, Melvin is hypnotized and does all sorts of kooky stuff. While enthralled, Melvin insults his schoolteacher, lifts up her dress, attacks Serena and tries to kiss her.

**4. HIT ME WITH YOUR BEST SHOT** Episode #5 (never translated) features some good, old-fashioned brawlin'! Serena's brother Sammy kicks Luna, Serena beats up Sammy, Luna attacks a cute fuzzy animal...sheesh, there's more action here than in that *DBZ*!

**5. GET YOUR AGE!** Serena uses her disguise power in episode #6 to change into an adult. Then she wears a very kick-out outfit in a bar, and gets into a strange man's car.

**6. DADDY'S LITTLE GIRL** In episode #20, the girls go off on their own to a secluded hotel without an adult chaperone. Here in the U.S., that's called a "prom."

**7. LOVE LOST** In episode #42, Sailor Venus falls in love with an adult man in London. Seems that's fit for *Dawson's Creek*, but not an American cartoon...

**8. BERSERK OF LAUSERS** There's a page in this issue of *Anime Invasion* devoted to the changes made in the climactic Scouts vs. Queen Beryl battle—check it out on page 34!

**9. BEACH BLANKET BUBBLES** Almost every episode that features the girls in bathing suits has been cut from North American broadcast, like episode #67, which features the girls on an isolated island. Sorry, Gligan.

**10. WORTH THE WEIGHT** In episode #4, Serena's worried she's fat, so she goes on a dangerous diet: skipping meals, working out too much, etc. In the U.S. version, it's explained that she forgot her lunch, not that she's skipping any meals.

**11. BUBBLES...** Also in episode #4, Serena's in a hot tub where she sports a heckuva lot of cleavage. However, when the episode was edited for the U.S. audience, the cleavage was colored over as foamy water. Damn bubbles.

**12. USAR AND ABUSER** In episode #8, a scene is cut where Serena imagines her mother strangling her for getting another bad grade. Same goes for a voiceover of Serena plotting to be friends with Amy so that Amy can do her homework.



By Jennifer M. Contino

WED CHASE thought Sailor Moon  
her friends were innocent! (page 34)

I SCREAMED ORIGIN! What's she  
doing with that ice cream??



**13. DIRTY OLD MAN** Raye's grandfather makes some suggestive faces in episode #10 and even offers to give the girls a "tour of the temple." Hoo boy.

**14. DIRTY OLD MAN, PART 2** In episode #16, Raye's grandfather asks Amy if she wants to get married at the temple, but she replies that she has no groom. So Grandpa offers to make an honest woman outta her. Yuck.

**15. HATES** Nephrite uses an x-ray crystal in episode #24 to search the sleeping Moly's room. Nephrite looks through the sheets...and pajamas...to see what she's hiding.

**16. CAT SCRATCH FEVER** In episode #52, Mina calls her cat Artemis a pervert because he's looking at her while she's changing her clothes.

**17. FEEL THE GUN!** Grandpa complains there're no girls at the shrine anymore in episode #53. In the U.S. episode, Grandpa talks about opening up an aerobics martial arts class instead.

**18. GENDER BENDER** All four of the generals of the Negaforce are men in the original Japanese anime. However U.S. (and Spanish) censors didn't like the homosexual relationship between Zoycite and Melchite, so Zoycite was changed to a female.

**19. GENDER BENDER, PART 2** In *Sailor Moon S*, Amara (Uranus) fools the girls into thinking she's a boy. Both Lita and Serena develop a crush on Amara before she reveals her true gender.

**20. PARTY RAIDERS** In episode #7, two girls are telling jokes on a stage about going into an American store and asking for a skillet and some tea. Thanks to their rotten English, they get perches instead.

**21. STUFF A SOCK IN IT** As Serena opens a drawer in episode #19 to get ready for a party, she says, "I'll wear clean underwear." In the U.S. version, however, she states, "I'll wear my coolest socks." The words were changed, but the drawer is still full of panties.

**22. MORE THAN MEETS THE EYE** In the Japanese version, the Scouts' transformations show lines indicating breasts and, er, other body parts. Those lines were erased and special effects added to hide their nakedness.

**23. SAILOR LUSH?** In episode #21, Zoycite makes a remark about Nephrite poisoning Sailor Moon's lemonade. But it isn't a lemonade jug near Sailor Moon; it's a brandy snifter. No wonder her grades are so bad...

**24. SAILOR BOOZEHOOND?** In episode #22, Serena, thinking it's punch, drinks a glass of booze. While the scene was cut from the U.S. episode, her rosy cheeks and goofy expression weren't tampered with.

**25. FAREWELL, MY DEAR LUNA...** For some reason tons of *Gone With the Wind* references were excised from episode #31. The cat chasing Luna is Red Butler (Rhett Butler), the title girl's last name is O'Neil, and she has a Scarlet O'Hara hairstyle. After Ched n... goes off, R... comments about him leaving quickly...as if he's gone with the wind.

**26. UNWITTING: THE BABY?** Zoycite impersonates Sailor Moon and pretends to be trapped. When Sailor Moon arrives, she

comments: "That's a bad hobby to tie up girls like that!" In America she says: "I'm the original champion of justice. Let that girl go!"

**27. HIT ME BABY ONE MORE TIME** In episode #35, Mars slaps a whiny Serena across the face to snap her out of her mood. The slap was cut from the guts of the U.S. episode, but left in the preview of the show's opener.

**28. IN THIS TIME, MY LIMBS WERE...** One of the Candens is strangling Sailor Moon in episode #57, but the Moonlight Knight rescues her. In the edited version he gets to Sailor Moon even before the demon gets its hands around her neck.

**29. CALL SOCIAL SERVICES!** In episode #73, Serena gets mad at Rini, and Danen grabs her hand to stop her from striking the child. Then he hands Serena his belt and says, "Do it proper." No, no, just kidding about that last part.

**30. PUPPY LOVE** One of the side stories throughout *Sailor Moon* is the crush Artemis had on Luna. Almost all flirting between the two cats is cut from the imported version.

**31. JUST CHARMING** Whenever Raya prays for answers in front of her temple's fire, a foreboding armored figure usually appears in the flames. That image was cut out of all the U.S. episodes except two.

**32. CRYSTAL POWER** When Sailor Moon goes for her Silver Emperum Crystal to defend herself against the Negaforce and finds it missing, Mars says she took it so the dark forces couldn't get it. In the Japanese version, Serena was afraid she couldn't keep it safe, so she gave it to Mars.

**33. THE WATER GIRL** In episode #47, Serena is late to school and forced to stand outside the classroom holding a bucket full of water. A nervous Serena ends up spilling the bucket all over her teacher.

**34. URINE DEEP TROUBLE** After Ann goes running from Danen's apartment in episode #53, Danen explains to Serena that the baby he's stinging for threw up all over Ann. But in the Japanese version, the baby sensed that Ann was evil and...peed on her.

**35. WANG CHUNG** Also in episode #53, Serena believes the baby is a girl and screams when she changes his diaper.



When Danen investigates, Serena cries, "The girl has a penis!" Man, you can't even say that on *Friends*!

**36. CUP CHECK** The Sacred Cup in *Sailor Moon S* was translated over as the "Purity Force" and then later the "Purity Chalice." Maybe American censors were afraid a Psychic Jack Strap would soon follow.

**37. ANOTHER BOO-WETTING LIBERAL...** Rini sleeps in Serena's bed in episode #68, making Serena mad because she has to share. In the Japanese episode, Rini's sleeping there because she wet her bed.

**38. URINE HUMOR, TAKE 99** Also in episode #68, Serena airs out Rini's portable bed and gets teased by Sammy that Serena's getting extra chores for being mean to their guest. In Japanese, Sammy teases that Serena wet her own bed.

**39. IS THIS A BUSY?** In episode #56, the director tells Lita she should star in the play because she has the biggest breasts—not "the most talent" as U.S. audiences were led to believe.

**40. EVERY PARENT'S NIGHTMARE** Serena's dad isn't pleased she's dating the college-aged Danen. In the U.S. version, Mom tells Serena to invite him over for dinner; but originally, Mom tells Serena to invite him over when Dad's away on business.

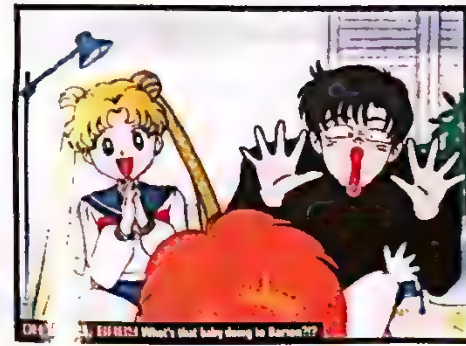
**41. HEARTBROKEN** When the evil in *Sailor Moon S* was translated to America, it became known as "Heart Snatchers," "Heart Thieves," "Demons" and countless other things. Sheesh, can't Americans just pick a name and stick with it?

**42. TOO CLOSE FOR COMFORT** In episode #64, the girls get trapped in an anti-gravity chamber. As they float toward the ceiling, Raye ends up underneath Mina's skirt. That's left in the U.S. version, but the line where Mina calls Raye a pervert isn't.

**43. FROM THE MOUTHS OF BABES** A lot of Rini's lines get changed over the course of the series. In episode #65, instead of saying she wants to marry Danen, Rini says that Danen and Serena were fighting and have broken up.

**44. THE 10TH PLANET?** The four sisters identify themselves as coming from the 10th planet, the Dark Moon. In the U.S. version, they don't say they're from a 10th planet. Schoolgirls with magic powers are fine, but a 10th planet is absurd.

**45. I'M TOO SEXY...** When Emerald first appears (episode #73), there's a long shot of her that pans up her



## SMALL WONDER!

They're tiny, they're toony, they're K! Sailor Mooniey.

"Chibi" means "tiny" or "small" in Japanese, and cute "chibi" versions of popular anime or manga characters have been a mainstay of the art form for a long time.

Another term for chibi is "super-deformed," since the art style is just that—stunk-down, squat little versions of characters. Chibis are shorter with large heads and cartoonish expressions. They're easier to draw than regular versions and are also a lot of fun for expressing an extreme emotion: joy, misery or just plain shock. In Japanese, *Sailor Moon's* daughter Rini is known as "Sailor Chibi Moon," since she's really just a cute, smaller version of Mami!

Some of the most popular characters to make chibis out of are the Sailor Scouts and *Sailor Moon*. Web sites are filled with these champions of love and justice, striking poses and looking adorable. —J.C.

body to her face while swing music plays in the background. The U.S. version skips the leering camera angles.

**46. WHAT'S IN A NAME?** The Scouts' battle cries were inconsistent in the American version of *Sailor Moon S*. "Sparkling Wide Pressure" was usually identified correctly, but there were occasions that it was called "Jupiter Thunder Power" and "Supreme Thunder Crash."

**47. WHAT'S IN A NAME, PART 2** Venus' "Love-Me Chain" also got many names when it got imported to the U.S., fluctuating from "Venus Love Chain Encircle" to "Venus Love Chain Whip" to "Venus Love Chain Harness" and sometimes simply "Venus Love Chain."

**48. WHAT'S IN A NAME, PART 3** Chalk another one up to indecisive Americans. Uranus, Neptune and Pluto's transformations constantly changed from "Star Power" to "Planet Power," and their attacks would sometimes have their planet name in front of it and sometimes not.

**49. CROSSING THE LINE** In episode #74, all the scenes with the Sailor Scouts imprisoned on crystal crucifixes are removed from the U.S. translation. What, that's a touchy subject or something?

**50. KISSING COUSINS** In the Japanese version, Neptune and Uranus are not cousins but lovers. Big difference.

Freelance writer Jennifer Contino thinks To Kill a Mockingbird would have been a helluva lot better if "Scout" had the "Wind Shaking" attack.



# REANIMATED

CLASSIC ANIME FROM DAYS OF YORE:

## URUSEI YATSURA

**P**lenty of otaku know about *Ranma 1/2* and *Ju-Yasha*, and their combination of action and hilarity. Otaku even know about their creator, Rumiko Takahashi, and how she's the number-one female comic artist in the world.

But you may not know that it's all thanks to *Urusei Yatsura*. *Urusei Yatsura* (roughly translated as "Those Obnoxious Aliens") is one of the foundation stones of the entire modern anime genre. The tale of boy-meets-girl has never been so arduous, or hilarious.



The boy in this case is Ataru Moroboshi, the most lecherous teenager in the world. He's also the unluckiest, as evidenced when he gets randomly selected as Earth's champion to save the world from alien invasion by the Oni, a horned, green-haired race with a penchant for tiger stripes.

To show their sense of fair play, they offer to call off their fleet if Ataru can defeat their champion, Princess Lum, in a game of tag. Luckily, Ataru's talent for perversion wins the day: he distracts Lum by snatching off her bikini top and grabs her horns to win the game. When, in victory, he proposes marriage to his sweetheart Shinobu, Lum—and the horde of reporters nearby—thinks the proposal is meant for her, and Lum immediately moves in.

And Ataru's hell begins. Lum tolerates none of Ataru's mania to meet chicks, and enforces it ruthlessly with her electric shocks. On Earth, Lum immediately acquires a legion of drooling male followers determined to get Ataru out of the picture, and Ataru tries to hit on every female alien in the galaxy. In addition, Lum's visiting alien family and friends help to liven up (and extensively damage) Tokyo to no end. Ataru's misfortune invites the most eclectic cast of characters storming through his house, determined to do him in, or—in the case of the beautiful alien women that he chases after—make Lum do him in herself.

With a theme song that urges people to "make it weird," *UY* boasts anime's funniest and most bizarre stories. Alien invaders come by so often, no one is fazed by it by the end of the first season. Watermelon gods with eternal curses, figures from Japanese myth that refuse to wear pants, alien diseases that turn boys' eyes into overly-cute-manga-style girls' eyes—all par for the course for Ataru and crew.

The series' popularity is mostly due to Rumiko Takahashi's incredible fusion of romantic comedy, science fiction and Japanese folklore. The alien Oni are a soft version of the Japanese devils of legend, the Oni, down to their tiger-stripes. Most Japanese myths make it into *Urusei Yatsura* in some form or another, but usually with

ONI SHOW UP deceptively cute Lum at the end, above, in her alien person of Ataru.



some wacky, modern-day twist. Another reason the series became so popular in Japan is because, beneath all the madness, it's an amazing glimpse of real suburban life in Japan. Ataru and his family are as incredibly typical and normal as possible—it's just everything that happens to them that's insane.

*UY* started its run on Japanese television in 1981 and became incredibly popular in Japan, running for five years. Twenty-five volumes of TV episodes have been released in the U.S. by AnimeEigo—a little more than half of the show's run—and are currently being reissued on DVD.

The series spawned several theatrical movies, as well, the first two, *Only You* and *Beautiful Dreamer*, are considered masterpieces of surreal romantic comedy and were directed by Mamoru Oshii (*Ghost in the Shell*). AnimeEigo offers six tapes of OVAs and all of the movies—except *Beautiful Dreamer*, which is available from Central Park Media. The manga, which Takahashi drew until 1987, has been brought out partially by Viz Comics. They and the graphic novel collections can usually be found in most comic stores.

So why should you watch *Urusei Yatsura*? Because it's the first, freshest and funniest work by one of the manga and anime industry's top talents—a woman who is now the highest-selling female comic artist in the world. Because, with its huge cast of characters, stories and comedy, it's like the *Simpsons* of Japan. Because of all you can learn about Japanese culture and history from it. Because it's probably the most unwilling love story ever conceived.

And because Lum will shock you if you don't.

UK: 1 Helen McCarthy is co-author of *The Anime Encyclopedia*. 1 can tell good from evil on sight.

## ROLE CALL



**ATARU MOROBOSHI** is the most lecherous, unluckiest boy in the universe. His main ambition in life is to get his hands on as many beautiful chicks as possible. That's pretty much him to a tee.



**LUM** is Princess of the Oni, a green-haired biker with cute little horns whose husband dries in a tiger-stripe bikini and matching boots. Despite the fact that Ataru is the worst husband in the world, she refuses to give up on him—we let him get away.



**SHINOBU**, Ataru's long-suffering girlfriend, is the typical Japanese girl-meets-boy. Unfortunately, Ataru's behavior often sends her into fits of jealous rage, in which she can effortlessly hurl darts of Ataru. Eventually, she stops caring.



**CHAMELEON** is a Beldarist man who constantly interferes in Ataru's life. He constantly predicts doom and misfortune for the teenager, even if he has to ensure that it happens himself. Although sworn to moderation, his gluttony for food, at least, does exceed Ataru's.



**TETSU** is Lum's baby cousin, who came to Earth to visit Lum and shock around to make Ataru's life miserable with his fire-breathing. Although a huffer, he shamelessly uses his cuteness to be held to the chests of attractive women. **■ UM**

## RUMIKO WHO?

While studying at Japan Women's University in Tokyo in the 1970s, Rumiko Takahashi signed up for *Kamen Rider* and *Ghost in the Shell* manga school in her spare time. For two hours every weekday evening, Takahashi turned out pages of comics and developed her own approach to character-driven comedy.



In 1978, she won the New Artists' Award from publisher Shogakukan and Shogakukan began publication in the prestigious weekly magazine *Shonen Sunday*. It wasn't an overnight success—when the 67 cartoons started its TV run in 1981, Takahashi was still working another job full-time and sleeping in the chest of her tiny one-room apartment. By the show's end, Takahashi was one of the most celebrated manga artists in the country. *UY*'s success allowed her to focus entirely on writing and drawing her own works, and over the last two decades she has continued to produce popular comics. In addition to *Ataru* and *Shonen Sunday*, Takahashi's other series include *Amigurami*, which focuses on life and romance in an apartment house in '80s Tokyo, and *Ranma 1/2*, a martial-arts comedy that mirrors *UY*'s unwilling romance and has been possibly her greatest success in the West.

*Harry Potter's J.K. Rowling* is considered successful for selling over 100 million copies of her work worldwide, but Takahashi has surpassed that total in Japan alone, becoming one of the nation's richest authors. Her latest series, *Inu-Yasha*, is a hit on both sides of the Pacific, in addition to being one of the most popular cartoons in Japan today. **■ UM**





## ROBOTECH ORIGINS

ORIGINAL JAPANESE SOUTHERN CROSS AND NEW GENERATION COMING TO DVD

**R**obotech fans, hold onto your protoculture: the original, unedited versions of *Super Dimension Cavalry Southern Cross* and *Genesis Climber Mospeada* are on their way to America for the first time ever.

Originally broadcast in Japan in 1983-84, these shows were two of the three separate anime TV shows that Harmony Gold fused together back in 1985 to create the *Robotech* saga (the second and third chapters, known as "Southern Cross" and "New Generation," respectively). While *Robotech* has been available through VHS and DVD, the original *Southern Cross* and *Mospeada* series have never been seen by American audiences. Now, courtesy of ADV Films, the makers of the recent best-selling *Robotech* DVDs, fans will finally get to see what they missed, including cut footage, the original Japanese dialogue—and the series' original plots!

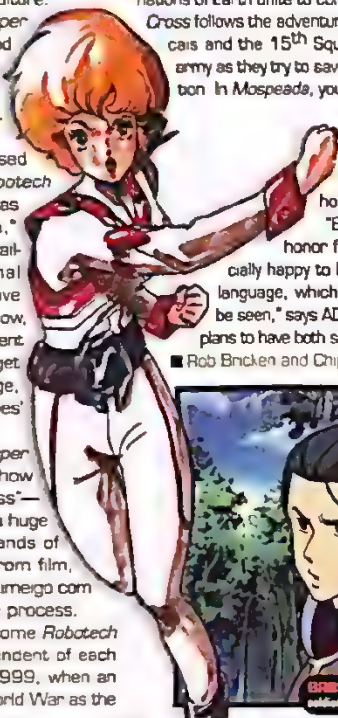
Animeigo recently released the original *Super Dimension Fortress Macross* series—the show used as the first part of *Robotech*, "Macross"—as a 9-DVD boxed set, and it's already been a huge seller. Animeigo spent hundreds of thousands of dollars digitally re-transferring the video from film, removing film flaws; you can visit [macross.animeigo.com](http://macross.animeigo.com) to see some "before-and-after" shots of the process.

Before they were forged together to become *Robotech* in America, each show was totally independent of each other. *Macross* follows the events after 1999, when an alien spacecraft lands on Earth, halting a World War as the

nations of Earth unite to combat the alien threat. *Southern Cross* follows the adventures of hot-headed Jeanne Francis and the 15th Squadron of the Southern Cross army as they try to save their colony world from extinction. In *Mospeada*, young pilot Stick Bernard sets out on a suicide mission and gathers a band of rebels to invade the headquarters of their alien oppressors, to wrest their homeworld back from the invad.

"Bringing it to the States is a big honor for us at ADV, and we're especially happy to be releasing it in the Japanese language, which is the way it was intended to be seen," says ADV President John Ledford. ADV plans to have both series out in stores later this year.

■ Rob Bricken and Chip Carter



GEN'S OUT BRICK: Jeanne may be a good soldier, but Stick just likes staring at her butt.

### TRAILERS

WITS-SIZED NEWS FOR QUICK DISSECTION

#### ESCAPING ENTASIS

Great news from *Wanted* for "Wanted" fans: This year, you should see a collection of the best of all eight volumes of the *Wanted* TV series, including the first and last volumes of the series, the 2001 *Wanted* movie, and the 2002 *Wanted* movie. The DVD set also includes a 225-page book, a collection of original storyboard drawings by director Michael McC

#### OSCAR SPEECH

Recommended: *Wanted* is a movie that makes her debut as a Hollywood action star. *Wanted* is a movie that makes her debut as a Hollywood action star. *Wanted* is a movie that makes her debut as a Hollywood action star.

#### CITY HUNTERS

Fans of the recent movie of *Wanted* (aka *Metropolis*) start your imports—the Japan-only *Metropolis* Memorial Box will include a second DVD with bonus footage, trailers, a 225-page book, a collection of original storyboard drawings by director Michael McC



## FROM THE ASHES

THE RISES AND FALLS OF GAINAX STUDIOS

**E**verybody loves a comeback story, and Gainax Studios, the animators behind *Neon Genesis Evangelion*, have provided several in the studio's 20-year history.

After running amateur sci-fi conventions in '70s Japan, several core committee members managed to produce their own animation sequences, which drew enough acclaim for anime giant Bandai to greenlight a full-length film, *Wings of Honneamise*.

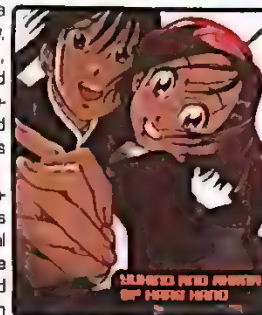
The film was a box-office failure but became a cult classic. Gainax followed up with critical hits *Gunbuster*, *Nadia: Secret of Blue Water* and the self-parodying *Otaku no Video* in 1991 (about a rookie animation company run by otakus), although by this point they had lost popularity and were in financial trouble.

In 1995, Gainax made their comeback with *Evangelion*, which took Japan by storm, spawning a huge following, even though the last episodes of the show were criticized for their low-budget feel. Gainax attempted to right things with *Evangelion* movies, intended to replace the last episodes of the TV series, but the movies drew mixed reviews. Then tax troubles beset Gainax, and members of the core group drifted in and out.

Gainax's next two projects, *Kare Kano* (translated as "His or Her Circumstances") and *FLCL* (a.k.a. *Fooly Cooly*) were quite popular but failed to capture the same huge attention as *Evangelion*.

However, they're all great anime—Right Stuf plans to bring *Kare Kano* out this spring, and Synch Point will produce the first *FLCL* DVD volume in March. Meanwhile, the *Evangelion* movie DVDs are on track for April from Manga Entertainment.

With help from their American fans and their stellar shows, Gainax is poised to rise yet again. ■ AB & CC



SHANNON FROM EVANGELION OF HONNE AMISE



LAND OF FLCL (FLCL HODOL)

## EASTERN EGGS

HIDDEN SECRETS OF MOON FAVORITE ANIME DVDS

What could be better than ripping open the shrink-wrap of a brand-new DVD? Hidden features, that's what! (So worried—not every access method will work on every DVD player.)

### 3 X 3 EYES

Go to "Extras," select "Extras," "Actors," then Megumi's name; then press right to access a hidden image gallery.

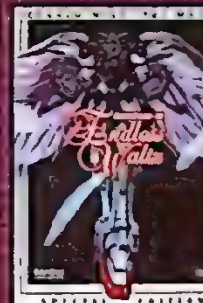


### COSES, CELESTIAL LEGEND VOL. #1

Go to "Extras" and select "Character Profiles." Select Aya, and on her first page, highlight the right arrow, press up and highlight "FRIENDS." Select it for a house screen.

### GOBLET CROSS VOL. 2

Go to the track listing for the videos, and then to "Credits" and press "Enter." As the credits roll, hit "Enter" again to watch a video of the Knight Saber voice actresses singing together.



### GUNDAM WING: ENDLESS WALTZ SPECIAL EDITION

By going to the "Extras" section, and clicking on "Credits," you can hear the full-length version of "White Reflection" while looking at the screen.

### EL-HAZARD: THE MAGNIFICENT WORLD

Let the main menu play to the end of the music and

restart. Press 5. Pictures of caves appear with a numbered keypad in the upper left. Press the digits in the keypad to get to the image.

### IRRESPONSIBLE CAPTAIN TYLER VOL. #1-4

While on the Main Menu, move the cursor to the right. When the cursor is placed over one of the moving targeted ships and a target heads on one, you will access one of four different video collages of animation and original artwork. ■ CC





## ON THE SHELF

WHAT'S IN STORE FOR ANIME STORES THIS SPRING?

## MARCH RELEASES

## ASTRO BOY VOL. 1-3

The Japanese boy wonder comes back to America! This collection of the never-before-seen '80s TV show should delight everyone! Originally slated for February, it's been pushed back. Check out the boy wonder who started it all! (Manga Entertainment; VHS, \$19.95)

## DEVADASY

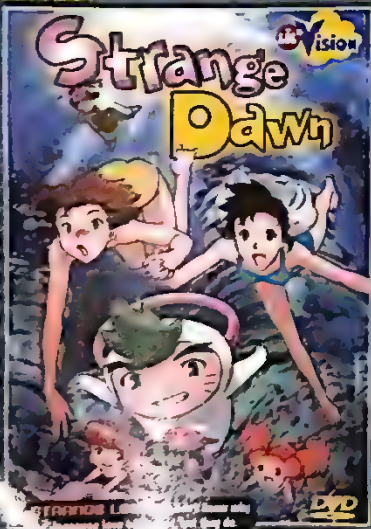
Even in 2012, young men like Kay are still plagued by nothing but homework and girl trouble. When an unknown force besieges Earth with robotic war machines, Kay must find his perfect match to use the super-weapon Devadasy and protect the peace of mankind! (AnimeWorks; VHS, \$19.95; DVD, \$24.95)

## HOT PICK

## STRANGE DAWN VOL. 2

April on DVD, \$29.99; Urban Vision

Almost every Japanese character has a "super-deformed" (SD) version—put him, where the head gets real big and the body gets real little—but here's a whole series full of small-bodied, big-hearted fun! Eri and Yoko, two ordinary high school girls, discover a world full of their anime-world where two tiny anime are constantly at war and think the two girls are their legendary guardians! All Eri and Yoko must do is go home, but which of the warring nations is telling the truth, and why can actually help them get home? In this volume, the Great Princesses set out on a quest to find a princess, but they get caught by the enemy! Eri and Yoko have to face a difficult choice: whether to join the enemy or stay and fight. This is a comedy series with Japanese and English dubs and a few good songs.



## DRAGON BALL: RED RIBBON SAGA

Two volumes continue young Goku's quest for the Dragon Balls in "Assault on Muscle Tower" and "White's Last Stand." Turns out the most evil, powerful crime organization in the world wants the Dragon Balls, too! (FUNimation; VHS, \$12.95)

## GHOST SWEEPER MIKAMI

Her name is Mikami and she's the sexiest exorcist/bounty hunter you will ever meet! When an evil vampire sorcerer returns to Tokyo after a 100-year absence, Mikami has to take him down before he takes over the city! (Manga Entertainment; VHS, \$19.95; DVD, \$29.95)

## GHOST TEACHER OTAKU VOL. 1

A foul-mouthed former motorcycle gang member plans to become the



best high-school teacher in the world! An anime action-comedy based on the popular manga series, it's also one of the most-watched live-action dramas ever in Japan. (TokyoPop; VHS/DVD, \$29.99)

## GUNDAM 08TH MS TEAM: MILLER'S REPORT

This Gundam film compiles clips from the first 8 episodes as well as new footage of the exploits of rookie Federation pilot Shiro Amada and the soldiers of the 08th M.S. team. (Bandai Entertainment; DVD, \$429.98)

## GUNDAM 003: STARDUST MEMORY VOL. 2

A renegade Zeon pilot steals a powerful new Gundam prototype with nuclear capabilities, and only one pilot can catch him and recapture the Gundam before he rejoins his forces! (Bandai Entertainment; DVD, \$29.98)

## JIN-ROH: THE WOLF BRIGADE

The anime movie of the millennium—so far! A soldier quiets himself in a Japan conquered by Nazi Germany! The Special Edition includes a bonus DVD

and a CD soundtrack. (Bandai Entertainment; Regular DVD, \$29.98; Special Edition DVD, \$59.98)

## KNIGHT HUNTERS: LOST BOYS

A mysterious organization is kidnapping young girls and selling their organs on the black market. Also, Weiss and Aya's next big challenge waits in the wings—another group of assassins known only as "Schreiend." (AnimeWorks; VHS, \$24.95; DVD, \$29.95)

## MAETEL LEGEND

From Anime legend Leiji Matsumoto comes the prequel to his space opera *Galaxy Express 999*. Princess Maetel must choose between living forever or saving her people. (Central Park Media; VHS, \$19.99; DVD, \$29.99)

## NADIA, SECRET OF BLUE WATER: NADIA'S ISLAND

Nadia and Jean have escaped Gargoy's terrible wrath, but now they must survive nature itself. Will Jean win Nadia's heart? Or will their differences seal their doom? (ADV Films; VHS, \$19.98; DVD, \$29.98)

## HOT PICK

## CARDCAPTOR SAKURA: THE MOVIE

March on DVD, \$19.98; Pioneer Animation

Finally, the world's cutest Cardcaptor gets her own flick! Based off CLAMP's hit manga and the TV series, the film was a hit when it was released in Japan in 1999. This full-length adventure starts when Cardcaptor Sakura finally captures the powerful Arrow card. After winning a trip to Hong Kong, Sakura, her big brother Jiro, her best friend Tomoyo, and her classmates Yukiko, enjoy their vacation until Sakura starts having strange dreams and weird premonitions—and what's more, a strange bird keeps following her! Is it trying to contact her? What do the cards mean? One thing's for certain—there's someone or thing out to get her, and the clues lead back to an ancient evil, the Clow Reed, the sorcerer who created the Clow Cards! Bubbled and oiled for all ages.

## NOW AND THEN, HERE AND THERE

From the director of *Jubei-Chan the Ninja Girl*, Torn from her childhood home through a time warp, Sara escapes slavery into a desert full of drifters and freedom fighters. (Central Park Media; DVD, \$29.99)

## ORPHEN: MYSTERY

When a killer doll traps Orphen and his friends in the City of Canals, it's a fight to the finish. Then, he must return to the college of magic to search for the Book of Shadows! (ADV Films; VHS, \$19.98; DVD, \$29.98)

## PRINCESS NINE: TRIPLE PLAY!

With just one position left to fill, the Princesses launch themselves into a grueling training schedule. Meanwhile, Keiko makes a second assault on the High School Baseball Association, only to be joined by an unexpected ally! (ADV Films; DVD, \$19.98)

## ROBOTECH: NEW GENERATION - GENESIS

As the valiant band of freedom fighters led by Scott Bernard makes its way to Reflex Point, they encounter evidence of a world they never knew. Allegiances are strained as the end is in sight. (ADV Films; DVD, \$14.98)

## ROBOTECH: NEW GENERATION - HOLLOW VICTORY

Scott Bernard and crew make their last attempt to destroy the Invid Queen and free Earth. The war will end, but at what price? The powerful conclusion to *Robotech*. (ADV Films; DVD, \$14.98)

## RURONI KENSHIN: SON OF GOD

Kenshin unravels the past of a rogue Hiten Mitsurugi master, and Kenshin is left to decide if a just war is truly impossible. (AnimeWorks; VHS, \$24.95; DVD, \$29.95)

## SAILOR MOON: TIME TRAVELERS! AND LOVE CONQUERS ALL

Double your pleasure! As the Neg





amoon's attacks on the city continue. Can the Sailor find there way through the dimensions of time and space and defeat the evil power of the Dark Crystal? (ADV Films; VHS, \$12.98 each)

### SOUL HUNTER: THE SPOILS OF WAR

This adaptation of an ancient Chinese legend continues to weave its terrifying, breathtaking and hilarious web as the forces of evil grow ever stronger and the forces of good just get crabbiest. (ADV Films; DVD, \$29.98)

### VANDREAD VOL. 2: NIRVANA

The beautiful and curious Dita keeps the hapless Hibiki off balance, and the crew of the Nirvana deals with the possible loss of Meia as she fights to stay alive. (Pioneer Entertainment; DVD, \$29.98)



### ZOIDS VOL. 1

Animal machines with incredible powers battle for supremacy. B-jons Team Blitz and learns to fight with his Zoid, Liger Zero. (Pioneer Entertainment; VHS, \$14.98; DVD, \$19.98)

## APRIL RELEASES

### A.D. POLICE: TO PROTECT AND SERVE BOX SET

The entire 12-episode series of this Bubblegum Crisis spin-off finds Officer Kenji Sasaki of the Genom City anti-robot crime division battling a mysterious rise in cyborg incidents—and a new by-the-book partner! (ADV Films; DVD, \$34.98)

### ADVENTURES OF THE MINI-GODDESS VOL. 2: THE BELLDANDY FILES

More celestial antics in bite-size form from the super-deformed Ah! My Goddess crew and their rat friends. Ten 8-minute episodes filled with wacky divine humor! (Pioneer Entertainment; DVD, \$29.98)

### DRAGON BALL Z: MAJIN BOO - EMERGENCE

It's bad news for the Z gang—Goku's dead, Vegeta's dead and Gohan's dead too! Can anyone stop the pink monstrosity that is Boo? (FUNimation; VHS, \$12.95)

### GUNDAM DOB VOL. 2

Volume Two finishes up the six-part miniseries as the survivor of the Cyclops Team squares off against a Zeon nuclear attack! (Bandai Entertainment; DVD, \$29.98)

### LOVE HINA VOL. 2

The second volume of the popular comedy follows Keitaro's adventures as manager of a girl's dorm while he struggles to get into college and not be killed by his tenants! (Bandai Entertainment; DVD, \$29.98)

### MEDABOTS: TRANSPORT METABEE

Ten-year old Ikki has one wish: to show off his Medabilities. When Ikki stumbles across the key to every Medabot soul, the chance to become a part of this super-charged world of high-performance fighting robots suddenly becomes a reality. (ADV Films; DVD, \$29.98)

### NEON GENESIS EVANGELION: DEATH AND REBIRTH

This compilation of the groundbreaking TV phenomenon finally arrives! It's cataclysmic Eva action as the fate of humanity rests on the shoulders of a 14-year old boy! (Manga Entertainment; DVD, \$29.98)

### SABER MARIONETTE J-K VOL. 1

Faust is back, tinkering with Marionette technology. Will the Saber dolls help Faust or Otaru—or are they headed for the junkyard? The sequel to *Saber Marionette J*! (Bandai Entertainment; DVD, \$29.98)

### SPRIGGAN

Yu Omihara is a Spriggan, an elite agent for the mysterious worldwide organization, AFCAM. When the fabled Noah's Ark is discovered, AFCAM is pitted against a rogue division of cyborg warriors working for the United States, who want to harness the Ark's fantastic powers in their quest for world domination. (ADV Films; DVD, \$29.98)

### TENCHI MUUYO! THE TRUE PRINCE

On the run from the Galaxy Police, the Jurai military and just about everyone else in the universe, Tenchi makes his way closer to the final battle! (Pioneer Entertainment; VHS, \$14.98)

## MAY RELEASES

### ASTRO BOY VOL. 4-6

When a professor adopts the robot boy at a circus, the boy becomes a hero! More never-before-seen color episodes of the anime title that started it all—*Astro Boy*! Only on VHS for now, but the DVDs will be released in 2003 (*Astro Boy's* "birthday")! (Manga Entertainment; VHS, \$19.95)

### GUNDAM: THE MOVIE BOX SET

Three Gundam movies, packed with mobile suit goodness! Made from the original TV series, these chronicle young Amuro Ray as he becomes the pilot of Gundam RX-78 and is thrust into the Zeon/Earth Federa-

tion war. (Bandai Entertainment; DVD, \$69.98)

### STEEL ANGEL KURUMI

Nakahito, a shy young man, accidentally awakens Kurumi, one of three extremely sexy androids known as "Steel Angels." (ADV Films; DVD, \$29.98)



## HOT PICK

### ROUJIN 2

April on DVD, \$29.95; Central Park Media

You wouldn't figure the writer/artists of *Ally* to come up with an anime. When one tale about taking care of the elderly through robotic mechanisms, but he did, and the world is better for it.

As Japan tries to deal with the expense of its aging residents, young Kurumi just tries to take care of old Mr. Takemura until the elderly man is chosen to be the prime minister for a new type of futuristic, artificially intelligent, mechanical body. Thing that looks like his young grandpa. Kurumi worries that the machine is too cold and impersonal to truly care for a human, but little does she realize that the care-free A.I. has a heart of its own.

See the A.I. in action in *Roujin 2* as Kurumi tries to help Mr. Takemura. Kurumi is too good to be true, but she's got the heart of a champion. The anime is a great way to see the future of care for the elderly in an anime setting. *Roujin 2* is a must-see for anyone who cares about the future.



## HOT PICK

### YU YU HAKUSHO

April on DVD, \$29.95; FUNimation

When *Dragon Ball Z* topped the charts in Japan, only one show kept up with it: *Yu Yu Hakusho*. Yusuke Urameshi is a punk—failing his classes, getting into fights at the drop of a hat, etc.—with no friends and a mom who cares more for the bottle than him. No one figures he'd risk his life to save a young kid from a speeding bus—least of all him. But he does, and he dies for his troubles... but that's when his troubles really begin. Since he died before he was scheduled, the afterlife doesn't know what to do with him except make him a spiritual detective, investigating any disturbances caused by the demon world, alongside his former rival Kamehara and other spirits. *Yu Yu Hakusho* is filled with action, magic and a great deal of humor as Yusuke tries to return to the land of the living, deal with the ladies and keep demons from taking over the earth—but still maintain his tough guy image!







## DIVE INTO IT

### CARTOON NETWORK'S ADULT SWIM EXPANDS!

Cartoons can be for more than just kids, a fact made hysterically clear by Cartoon Network's late-night Adult Swim programming block. Now, Cartoon Network is launching a block of pure anime aimed at adults—Adult Swim Saturday! Debuting in late February or early March, ASS will premiere three well-known anime that have never been shown on U.S. television before (Yu Yu Hakusho, Pilot Candidate and Gundam 0083), backed up by returning favorites like Tenchi Muyo!, Outlaw Star and Cowboy Bebop. Here's the 411 on the new shows.

#### YU YU HAKUSHO

Yusuke Urameshi is a teen street thug who, in an uncharacteristic act of heroism, sacrifices his own life to save a child. This earns him the right for a second chance at life on Earth, but it comes with a price: he has to hunt the dark spirits that prey on the Living World. To accomplish this goal, he's given the power to fire heavenly energy from his fingertips, and he gathers unlikely allies to help him in his quest.

#### PILOT CANDIDATE

The planet Zion is under attack by a powerful enemy from deep space, and their last hope is their fighting mecha, known as Goddesses. This series follows one trainee named Zoro, who has to learn to fly a Goddess—and how to work



with the other pilot candidates—to save his world!

#### GUNDAM 0083: STARDUST MEMORY

Three years after the cataclysmic One Year War, the Principality of Zeon and the Earth Federation are at peace. But a rogue group of Zeons, known as the Delaz Fleet, plan to rebuild their conquering army. Their first step is to steal a prototype Gundam, the GP02, which is equipped with a nuclear arsenal! ■ Karl Cramer

## TUNE IN TOKYO

BE A FAN OF A SHOW ONLY ON THE AIR IN JAPAN

**H** The manga, anime and DVD, is now a TV series. In fact, the 2001 *Rockman EXE* series was the ground that led to this year's anime. *Rockman EXE* is a series about a computer virus that can turn any computer into a robot. The series is based on the popular video game *Rockman EXE* by Capcom. It's got action, humor, and a great soundtrack. The series is set in a world where computers are the main source of power. The story follows a young boy named Hikari who is a computer genius. He is the only one who can see the computer viruses. He is the only one who can fight them. He is the only one who can save the world. The series is a great example of how a video game can be adapted into a successful anime series.

**IN THE TO AIR**

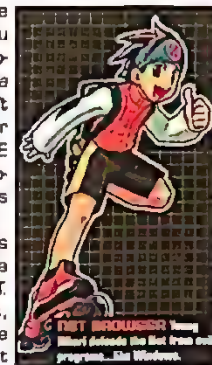
## LIKE A ROCK

### MEGA MAN GETS A NEW LIFE IN JAPAN

Rockman, better known as Mega Man in the U.S., gets a new animated series in March on TV Tokyo. *Rockman EXE*, based on the similarly titled Game Boy Advance game, is a departure from the Mega Man story you know from the Capcom videogames or the previous *Mega Man* anime. This Rockman isn't even a robot! He's a computer program, hence the .EXE suffix; he's been created to protect computers from viruses and cyber-crimes.

In the future, everyone is connected to the Net via portable computers called PET. Instead of Web browsers, users have Artificial Intelligence programs known as Net Navigators helping them do stuff. Schoolboy Hikari Netto is the computer genius who created Rockman, a Net Navigator that kicks virtual butt. Instead of using computers for downloading music or Britney pics, Hikari is something of an anti-hacker. He uses his skills to stop bad guys from doing bad things.

In the real world, Hikari has to deal with school, parents and bullies just like everyone else. But he and his friends also look for clues about the latest cyber-crimes. Who's behind it? What's their real objective? These answers often help Rockman in the virtual world, where all the action is. Rockman isn't limited to the cyberworld, though. He can infiltrate systems to help Hikari in the real world. If a building's security door won't open, Rockman can get in the system to open it. Seeing how popular *Mega Man* games are in North America, this TV series has an excellent chance of coming here. ■ KC



## ON THE AIR

### UPDATES AND INFORMATION ON ON-ROCK-TIME CHOICES

#### ACTION CHANNEL

While no show times have been set, check your TV schedule (usually weekend late-nights) for commercial-free, must-see *Blood Reign: Curse of the Yama*, *Cyber City O.E.S.S.*, *Battle City Shinjuku*, *BNA Sights*, *399.9*, *Casey's Cats*, and *Macross 2: Lovers Again*.



#### CARTOON NETWORK

**Teenage** Weekdays from 5-7 p.m.: The ever-shifting *Somnium* anime block will include *Dragon Ball Z*, *Tenchi Muyo!*, *Tenchi Muyo! Ryo-Ohki*, *Zoids* and possibly *Big & Little*. Saturdays from 7-9 p.m.: are solid two hours of *Dragon Ball Z*. **Midnight Run**: Weekdays from 12-1 a.m.: Set your VCRs for *Cowboy Bebop*, *Dragon Ball Z* and *Outlaw Star*. **Adult Swim**: Saturday from 11 p.m.—1 a.m.: See the related article for the big news!

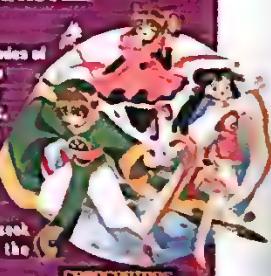
#### FOX KIDS

Bad news: Fox has decided to cancel its weekday Fox Kids network programming, leaving it up to individual stations if they want to air syndicated cartoons or something else. Good news: Fox Kids' Saturday is still going strong and will be showing all-new episodes on all their channels. **Digimon: Digital Monsters**: Sat. 9 a.m. & 10:30 a.m. **Medabots**: Sat. 9:30 a.m. **Mon Colle Knights**: Sat. 11 a.m. **Transformers: Robots in Disguise**: Sat. 8 a.m.



#### KIDS' LULU

**Cardcaptors**: With only 70 episodes of the original *Card Captor Sakura* made, the U.S. version is nearing the end of its run. But worry not, Sakura fans, there were also two movies made that should make their way to American shores. **Pokemon**: Weekdays 3 p.m. & 4 p.m., Sat. 10-11 a.m. **Yu-Gi-Oh!**: Yugi and his friends seek answers to the origin of the Millennium Puzzle.



#### SHOWTIME BEYOND

Check [www.sbs.com](http://www.sbs.com) for scheduled times. Showtime's experimental channel shows must-see episodes of the *Final of the North Star* TV series. ■ KC



## FAN SERVICE

## KEEPING IT REAL... DOESN'T

In Japan, most nudity is not a social taboo, but it's still far to look at. Hence the anime institution known as "fan service"—i.e., gratuitous female skin-baring. Of course, when anime comes to America, creators feel the need to make it safe for American kids, so not your typical skin. But just like you can't take the form out of the boy, you can't take the cheesecake out of the anime.

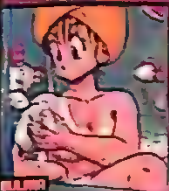


## TENGEN MUZO

What does a space pirate have to do to win the love of Tengen Muzo? Consume acts of violence and wear scanty outfits; luckily, Ryoko does both. But American viewers can't all of the hot springs scenes, where Ryoko refuses to wear clothes at all.

## CAPTAIN BLOODY

Eyes bleaching in fan service. Every second of her screen time is a magnet of delight for boys of all ages.



## DRAGON BALL

Reborn a victim of the standard anime practice of the shonen genre. It was given up for 1992, but in 2002, she took her more battle and shounen than the shounen public really needed.

## OUTLAW STAR

Not that Cartoon Network monitors it, but the way Madoka pilots the ship is by stripping down and getting in a suit of gold. How that works, we don't know.



## POKÉMON

There are way too many boys who watch Pokémon solely for the anime and for cool midriff-baring shorts and short skirts. At least one boy is a fan, and not the episodes where the anime has breaks.

## TRANSFORMERS: ROBOTS IN DISGUISE

When you think of the 21st century, there's one name everyone can agree on: Ray Smith. So here it is.



## ZOIDS...RETURN?

THE ZOIDS YOU'RE SEEING ARE ONLY THE LATEST

Zoids was a last-minute addition to Cartoon Network's Toonami programming block this past year, so American fans might not be aware that the Zoids show they're watching is just the latest version of a Japanese phenom that's been going on for more than 10 years!

Zoids started out as a blockbuster toyline during the '80s in Japan featuring giant robot versions of animals—they were even offered in the U.S. for a limited time. The inevitable cartoon began. Machine Beasts New Century Zoids, had a pioneering technique of combining CGI with traditional cel animation. The story revolved around Ban and Feene, two kids caught up in a war on the planet colony Zi.

The Zoids show on Toonami is actually the second TV sequel, Zoids New Century/O. It ignores previous continuity in an attempt to become more like Pokémon—no wars, just collecting Zoids and Zoid competition. If you would like to see the original, write Cartoon Network. ■ KC



OUT OF WHICH Like Gundam Wing, the Zoids are here in only a spinoff

## GIRL OF STEEL

STEEL ANGEL ANIME GOES LIVE-ACTION

Steel Angel Kurumi, the anime that has had two TV series and an OVA series, is going to become a live-action weekly TV series in Japan! Kotetsu Tenshi Kurumi Pure is scheduled to debut in the spring. Haven't seen Steel Angel Kurumi? That's what Anime Invasion is for.

Kurumi looks and acts like any other energetic, teen girl, but she's really a super-strong android! Her one and only concern is for her master, Kagura Nakanto, a shy Shinto priest in training. Created by Dr. Anyano, Steel Angels were created to help humanity in case the world needs to be saved. But the government may have other ideas, which are carried out by Shogun Academy. ■ KC



NO NEED FOR FURTHER explanation: these anime angels are going to be on their own.

EVERYTHING YOU'VE WANTED TO KNOW ABOUT THE COMICS, THE MOVIE AND MORE!

WIZARD

# SPIDER-MAN

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BLACK CAT  
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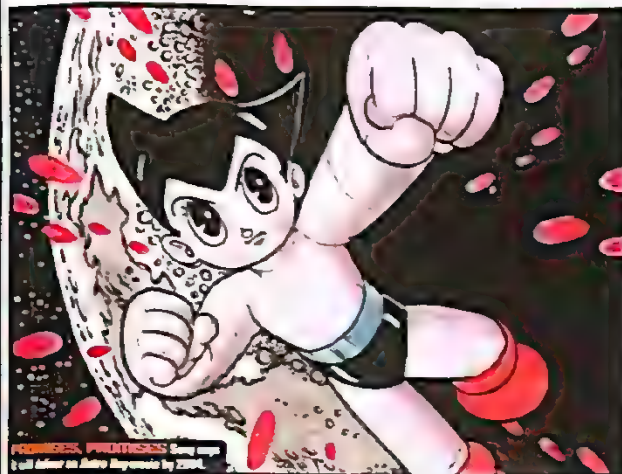


# THEATRICAL



## ASTRO'S NEW TURF

SONY PROMISES BOY FLICK FOR 2004



**W**e've heard this story before. Let's just hope this time it's true.

Sony Pictures has announced that it is developing Osamu Tezuka's *Astro Boy* character into the star of the studio's first all-computer-generated feature.

*Astro Boy*, based on the Japanese comic book, is scheduled for release sometime in 2004. The studio's Imageworks F/X facility has already begun tackling test footage. Eric Leighton, who co-directed Disney's *Dinosaur*, has signed a seven-figure deal to shoot from a script by

Todd Alcott (*Antz*) and Ken Kaufman (*Space Cowboys*).

The story follows a permanently youthful robot boy, modeled after the deceased son of a research scientist, who becomes a renowned superhero, complete with devices like laser-firing fingers, uncanny hearing and jet-powered boots—all eventually used to repulse an alien invasion of Earth.

Sony brass is eyeing Imageworks as its possible Pixar, the Disney-linked powerhouse behind the *Toy Story* films and *Monsters, Inc.*

This sounds great. But Sony has been promising an *Astro Boy* theatrical feature for almost three years now. On March 17, 1999, there was a front-page announcement in *The Hollywood Reporter* that Columbia (Sony) Pictures "is in final negotiations to buy film rights

to *Astro Boy* with an eye toward [...] a Christmas 2000 release. It is also possible that Henson's Creature Shop will build *Astro Boy*."

When Christmas 2000 rolled around, this live-action feature with extensive CGI and animatronics was rescheduled to Christmas 2001. Now it is to be an all-CGI production for "sometime in 2004." Let's hope that it doesn't join Warner Bros.' *Speed Racer* live-action theatrical feature, promised off and on throughout most of the 1990s before finally fading into limbo. ■ Fred Patten

### THE BUZZ

HAVE YOU HEARD THE LATEST?

#### DEATH'S CARRIER MOVIE

AMC Films will create an animated feature based on Charles G. Waite's public horror title, *Death's Carrier*. Adapted by writer Carl Macek, will write, produce and direct the reeling of this horror's origin. The movie (due out next year) will be a hybrid of American and Japanese animation, with a live-action CGI film image. It's a good thing the drawing is done.

#### TWO CATS RETURN

Studio Ghibli's next feature will be *Two Cats*, a sequel to the 1997 film *Kiki's Delivery Service*. Directed by Miyazaki, it stars the cat-like character Kiki, returning from her journey in the 1997 film. The movie is a sequel to the 1997 film *Kiki's Delivery Service*, which was a hit in Japan. It's a good thing the drawing is done.

#### SOMETHING TO HOPE FOR

If *Cowboy Bebop: Knockin' on Heaven's Door*, Japan's 2001 movie, features up-and-coming anime-popular 1998 TV/OVA series, does not get an American theatrical release, it won't be because of a lack of interest from Columbia/Tristar. Inside word has it they are hell-bent on bringing it to the U.S.



## BLAST WITH THE PAST

DVD MAVENS MEDIA BLASTERS TO ENTER THEATER GAME WITH CLASSIC FLICKS

**T**he big screen of American anime is being filled, slowly but surely. Media Blasters, an anime video and DVD distributor, has just announced it will be getting into the movie game. And while anime will take a back seat for now, the future looks good.

With three divisions—AnimeWorks for anime titles, Tokyo Shock for Asian live-action/adventure titles, and Shrek Show for European horror titles—Media Blasters' goal is "to have five or six theatrical releases by the end of 2002," says Mike Pascuzzi, MB's vice president of sales and marketing. Its first releases, tentatively scheduled for late February in NYC, will be from its Tokyo Shock line: two Hong Kong live-action sci-fi thrillers, *Riki-Oh* (1989) and *Robotrix* (1991).

"We feel that our cult horror and Asian action titles have real potential for the theatrical market," Pascuzzi explains. "Some of these played on the art-house circuit a decade or more ago, or in international film festivals more recently, but there is a new American audience today that has only heard about them."

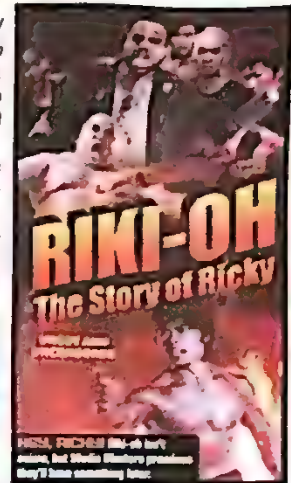
But why will Media Blasters' big anime library not be hitting the big screens soon?

Pascuzzi explains, "Our anime library consists primarily

of titles that were TV series, like *Rayearth* and *Ruroni Kenshin*, or direct-to-video releases like *Kite* and *Apocalypse Zero*. Some of those are not convenient running times for a theatrical movie. Others were designed to look good on a small, home-TV screen."

Though there will be no anime releases in 2002 from Media Blasters, Pascuzzi tells fans not to worry.

"We are looking at acquiring anime theatrical movies that have not been released in America yet. We definitely plan to include anime in our theatrical library." ■ FP



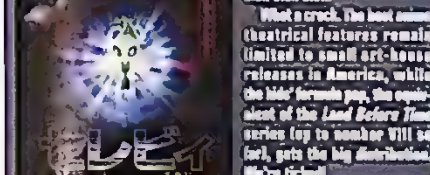
### COMING SOON!

#### JUST CAN'T KILL PIKACHU

Believe it or not, *Pokémon 4: Celebi, A Timeless Encounter*, the fourth annual *Pokémon* feature released in Japan theatrically last July, will come to the U.S. this summer.

In the latest installment, Ash and Pikachu are threatened by a menacing adult villain, Vicious (what do you bet that gets changed to *Sometimes for America's kids?*), the grown son of James and James, who has come from the future to help them stop Ash from becoming the next James.

What a crack. The best anime theatrical features remain limited to small art-house releases in America, while the kids' *Pokémon* pop, the equivalent of the *Land Before Time* series (up to number VIII so far), gets the big distribution. We're ticked!



What we want to see in *Celebi*, sending Ash and Pikachu time-traveling back to the past. Or to Pompeii in 79 AD for the eruption of Mt. Vesuvius, which covered the city in scalding ash. Or to London in 1666 for the Great Fire. Or to San Francisco in 1906 for the great fire.

## HOME BOX OFFICE

### 2001 YEAR IN REVIEW

**W**ithout a doubt, Japan's theatrical anime scene in 2001 was dominated by the phenomenal success of Studio Ghibli's *Spirited Away* (*Sen to Chihiro no Kamikakushi*).

Released by Toho Films on July 20, it quickly surpassed Hayao Miyazaki's last film, *Princess Mononoke*, in setting new box-office records as the top-grossing theatrical movie in Japan, live-action or animated. Japan's next-biggest anime release (not counting *Final Fantasy*, a Japanese/American co-production) did barely 15 percent as well. ■ FP

### FINAL TALLY FOR JAPANESE ANIME IN 2001

RANK	TITLE	DISTRIBUTOR	RELEASE DATE	BOX OFFICE GROSS (in millions of yen)
1	<i>Spirited Away</i>	Toho Films	July 20	266,539,656
2	<i>Final Fantasy: The Spirits Within</i>	SaGa Communications	Sept. 15	7,421,152
3	<i>Famous Detective Conan: Countdown to Heaven</i>	Toho Films	April 21	5,934,000
4	<i>2001 Spring Anime Fair</i>	Toei Co.	March 2	4,529,269
5	<i>Pokémon 4: Celebi, A Timeless Encounter</i>	Toho Films	July 6	3,114,306
6	<i>Princess Mononoke and the Wicked Baron</i>	Toho Films	March 10	12,726,917
7	<i>Crayon Shin-chan: The Great Adventure</i>	Toho Films	April 21	2,084,000
8	<i>Metropolis</i>	Toho Films	May 26	659,197
9	<i>Cowboy Bebop: Knockin' on Heaven's Door</i>	Sony Pictures	Sept. 1	629,765
10	<i>Initial D: Third Stage—The Moon</i>	Toei Co.	Jan 12	485,000





## HONORABLE MENTION

### ONIMUSHA 2 DEFENDS THE REPUTATION OF ITS MOST FAVORED CLAN

**S**amurais and zombies. Two great things that go better together. Or so Capcom's *Onimusha 2* proved.

A supernatural samurai action-adventure smash, *Onimusha* was a Resident Evil-influenced blockbuster that sold over 2 million units worldwide. It was inevitable that Capcom would draw its sword again with *Onimusha 2: Samurai's Destiny*.

"Our primary goal is to make an extremely fun and entertaining game that appeals to the player's sense of culture and intellect," explains Melinda Mongelluzzo, director of public relations for Capcom. Along these lines, *Onimusha 2*'s tale blends actual historical accounts from 16th century feudal Japan with Jyubei Yagyu, a young master of the Yagyu Shin-ryu swordfighting style, and magic. While seeking revenge against Nobunaga, here a ruthless warlord and murderous villain, you may also note certain recognizable artistic influences. Says Mongelluzzo, "*Onimusha 2* is based on famed Japanese director Akira Kurosawa's style of storytelling and sense of culture."



Visual symbolism is used to express ideas." Mayhap that's what the company had in mind when it elected to use the image of deceased actor Yusaku Matsuda as the hero's face.

Still more compelling are new environments to explore, including the Town of Imashou, the demon-ridden Ogre Island and even a gold mine. During visits, you use new "Ohg" sword techniques against foes, thereby breaking their weapons or eviscerating baddies without a second thought. For the pacifist, interludes between duels prove just as rewarding as combat, thanks to oodles of new CG storyline moves, double the amount found in the game's predecessor. Such sequences benefit from collaborations with live-action actors that lend realistic facial and body movement patterns to the presentation. Even having developed these new

**ONIMUSHA 2'S SECRET** The old school samurai action-adventure has come back with a vengeance in *Onimusha 2*'s family CG universe.



features in time for *Onimusha 2*'s summer 2002 release, Capcom is looking for more. Explains Mongelluzzo, "The *Onimusha* franchise will continue and develop with technology." You'll have to grab your PlayStation 2 this summer and imagine what those developments could be. ■ Scott Steinberg

## BITS OF BYTES

THE LATEST WORD ON GAMING

### READY TO RUTLE

concerns, showing his master's... classic fighting game style... more Mc... game.

### SATISFACTION

...game... more Mc... game.

### RETURN OF THE KING

...game... more Mc... game.



## WE WISH

### WHERE'S OUR LONE WOLF AND CUB VIDEO GAME?

The coolest samurai manga ever has deserved a video game for years, so we dreamed one up. It'd be two fighting games in one—when Ogame Ito, the former Shogun's executioner, has to fight the hordes of enemies coming to kill him, it'd be a 3-D *Final Fight* beat 'em up, with special moves involving his trap-niddled, gun-laden baby cart! But when it's time for a serious, one-on-one sword duel, it would switch to a fighting game—get hit in the gut with a sword, you die. And then there'd be blood and carnage, just like in the manga. Hey—no one ever said being a samurai hunted by ninja was pretty! ■ Robert Bricken

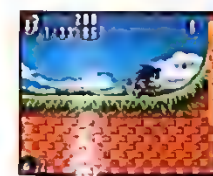


## HOT TIPS

### SECRETS FOR THE BEST GAMERS ONLY

**Mobile Suit Gundam: Zeonic Front (PS2)**

Want to put a bigger hurt on the Earth Federation? Beat Simulation Programs 1 and 2 with an "S" Rank (meaning a total of 8,000 points or more), and you unlock Char Aznable, the Red Comet himself, and the young general Garma Zabi, respectively.



**Sonic the Hedgehog Advance (GBA)**

Not satisfied with the ending? Beat the game with all four characters and find all seven Chaos emeralds (there's one in each stage). Beat the game again with Sonic, and then you'll fight a final version of Eggman...in outer space!

**Super Smash Bros. Melee (GC)**

To see all the Japanese Nintendo systems, just change the game language to Japanese. And after you get all characters and boards, you can get extra music in Versus mode, by hitting the L or R buttons to select the stage! ■ RB

## RELEASE SCHEDULE

WE PICK 'EM. YOU PLAY 'EM

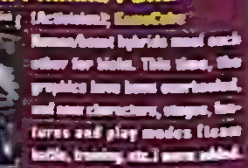
### 3/12: HOT SHOTS GOLF 3

(Sony); PlayStation 2  
This series has won over many with its charm and incredible two-tone, 10's a golf game, but it's way more. Big-headed Japanese people, incredible physics and great gameplay abound.



### 3/19: BLOODY ROAD: PRIMAL FURY

(Activision); GameCube  
Human/monster hybrids meet each other for blood. This time, the graphics have been overhauled, and new characters, stages, features and play modes (Team battle, training, etc.) were added.



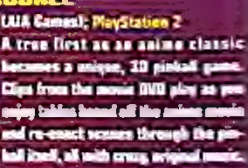
### 3/19: EVE OF EXTINCTION

(Eidos); PlayStation 2  
Classic beat 'em up action. Your ex-girlfriend morphs into stone, blades and other assorted weaponry. From the makers of *Resident Evil* on Dreamcast.



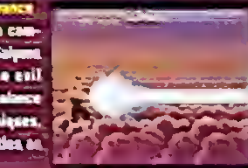
### 4/16: AKIRA PSYCHOBALL

(Atari); Game Boy Advance  
A true first as an anime classic becomes a unique, 3D pinball game. Clips from the movie DVD play as you enjoy tables based off the anime genre and re-enact scenes through the pinball itself, all with crazy original music.



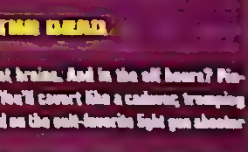
### 5/16: DRAGON BALL Z: THE LEGACY OF GOKU

(Infogrames); Game Boy Advance  
Action-adventurers mount a campaign to save Earth from the Saiyans and the universe from the evil Frieza's plans. Players must balance Meles and Ki fighting techniques, seeking out quests and battles as they go.



### 5/19: PINBALL OF THE DEAD

(Sega); Game Boy Advance  
Zombies smell. They also eat brains. And in the off hours? Pinball's their game of choice. You'll covert like a cadaver, tramping through multiple tables based on the cult-favorite light gun shooter *House of the Dead*.







## ONLINE UNDERGROUND

### AMATEUR MANGA SITES GET PROFESSIONAL

**H**anamakuru.com started it all: professional manga in a digital world.

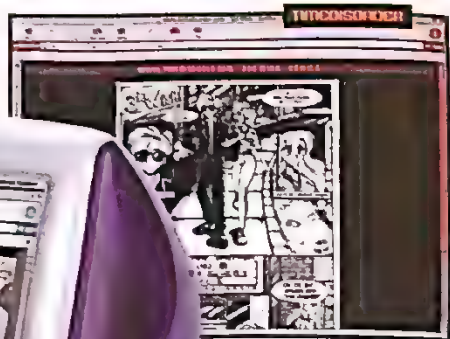
Just like movies and comics have their own independent scene, fans of online manga likewise have said "I can do that too," and gave birth to their own underground culture. Unlike most commercial on-line manga, projects were available to download for free. Some of the art was good, most of it amateurish. Some of the stories were good, most were beginner tomes. Not any longer.

With the influx of technology (and apparently more time on people's hands), amateur fan sites with original content are getting better and better.

Like most things in fandom, the successful sites start off with a few readers, catch a buzz and slowly build a following. Megastokyo.com, started by Fred Gallagher and Rodney Caston, charts the adventures of their alter egos Pino and Largo, who are stranded in Tokyo (every otaku's dream). Published three times weekly, readers chart



MEGASTOKYO



Pino and Largo's adventures and watch as the story unfolds. Megastokyo is well past the buzz stage.

With over a million hits a month, the comic contains plenty of inside jokes for anime fans, poking fun at Nadesico, Digi Charat and Card Captor Sakura, to name a few. It also contains inside jokes for gamers and regular readers.

Time Disorder ([www.time-disorder.com](http://www.time-disorder.com)), which has several online stories, and Genesis Chronicles ([www.genesischronicles.com](http://www.genesischronicles.com)) are also gaining

some popularity.

Whatever your taste in manga, chances are you can find free online fan manga to keep you happy. Of course, for all you talented artists out there, why not start up your own online comic? ■ Joe Curzon

### ON SCREEN

OFFICIAL WEBSITES EVERY OTAKU NEEDS

<b>CHARACTERS</b> <a href="http://www.characters.com">www.characters.com</a> The Official Characters Site contains lots of free online information and complete descriptions of the edited version of <i>Card Captor Sakura</i> . Accompanied with plenty of nice pictures of the characters and other details, it is bound to keep Card Captor fans happy.		<b>GENESIS CHRONICLES</b> <a href="http://www.genesischronicles.com">www.genesischronicles.com</a> Genesis Chronicles is a free online manga site featuring several stories, including the popular <i>Genesis Chronicles</i> by Fred Gallagher and Rodney Caston.		<b>MEGASTOKYO</b> <a href="http://www.megastokyo.com">www.megastokyo.com</a> Megastokyo.com is a free online manga site featuring the adventures of Pino and Largo, created by Fred Gallagher and Rodney Caston.	
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## MAKE YOUR OWN

### ANIME CHARACTERS CAN NOW QUAKE UP YOUR HALF-LIFE

**G**ame console players have it good: from Jo Jo's Bizarre Adventure to Lupin to DBZ, there's a wide range of anime-related games for the bean-bag-sit'n crowd. But PC gamers don't have all the choices—until now.

Fans of first-person shooters like *Quake 3*, *Unreal Tournament* and *Half-Life* have made player models of their favorite anime characters to insert into the games and frag each other. Have you ever wondered what Tetsuo would look like with a rail gun? Or perhaps the RX-78 GPO1 Gundam is more your thing? Unfortunately, a *Dragon Ball Z* mod called *Bid For Power* was nixed before it ever hit the ground (now it's a DBZ-inspired mod). But there are plenty of anime characters to play with. Here's where to go to download your favorites.

<http://www.planetquake.com/polycount/>  
[http://www.geocities.com/omegle\\_md/](http://www.geocities.com/omegle_md/)  
<http://www.bidforpower.com/>  
<http://dynamic.gamespy.com/~gundamuniverse/nd/downloads.htm> ■ JC



BUILT TO FRAG  
You can fight with Tetsuo.

## HANGING 10

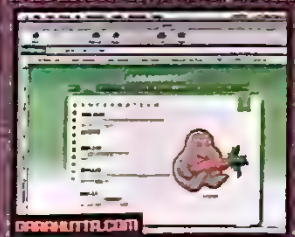
### WHERE ANIME BEATS SUPER TOY LINE

#### KARU KUROSAKI

**OCCUPATION:** Writer  
**MAJOR WORKS:** *Kai suru Riya IAAA: Reason to Love*, scriptwriter for *Captain Tenkai*  
**TV series**  
**HOME PAGE:** <http://www.romos.dti.ne.jp/~kurosaki/>



Kurosaki-san uses the Web to escape work by visiting the heartwarming *Kimagure Sorakotchi Nishi* (a.k.a. Lots of Fun Diary, <http://garakuta.com/index.html>), which features cute animation and shockwave games, or the smothering therapy of *Nana-Chan Today* ([www.ceres.dti.ne.jp/~hasechan/nana/naana.html](http://www.ceres.dti.ne.jp/~hasechan/nana/naana.html)), a bilingual photo diary about a real cat. When in the mood for darker humor, Kurosaki-san heads over



to Nana-chan's Inside Thoughts ([www4.sfnat.ne.jp/~mori/dora/](http://www4.sfnat.ne.jp/~mori/dora/)), which adds commentary to the kid-favorite *Doramen* comic with sarcastic or brutally honest dialogue. ■ Joe Curzon

## ANGER DANGER

### WHATEVER YOU DO, DO NOT CHECK OUT THESE WEBSITES

#### NINJA BURGER!

<http://www.ninjaburger.com/>

If you are always disappointed with your local pizza parlor's service, then why not try Ninja Burger, who promises "delivery in 30 minutes or less, or we commit Seppuku!" Masters of the Two-Spatula style, you know that the Big Kahuna burger has nothing on this Far East slab of beef. You can smell the flame-broiling flesh through your hard drive.



#### LET'S PLAY DANCING

[http://ja-1.tezuka.co.jp/play/games/dancing\\_atom/index.html](http://ja-1.tezuka.co.jp/play/games/dancing_atom/index.html)

Unknown to many, Astroboy is in fact one of the greatest dancers ever! This Website is for the brave, those who wish to challenge Astroboy to a dancing competition. Playing this interactive game will help you add some moves to your karaoke time.



#### BIG GUNDAM!

<http://www.geocities.co.jp/HeartLand-16544/photos.html>

Many otaku like building model kits, especially Bandai's Gundam kits. This otaku has taken it to an extreme with a giant 1/2 scale model! The working beam sabre should be ready soon to beat any Zaku that terrorize the neighborhood.



#### HARRY POTTA

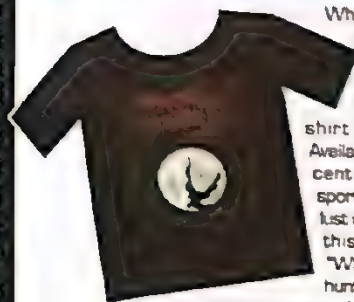
<http://www.hari-pota.com/>



As Harry Potter fever sweeps the globe, muggles and otaku alike may wonder what the manga version of Harry Potter would look like. Well, according to this site, he would look a bit like a male version of Digi Charat. This site is in Japanese, but does it really matter? ■ JC



## HUNT DOWN THIS TEE



When you're packing up your stakes and garlic before a big hunt, don't forget to don your Vampire Hunter O T-shirt from Urban Vis on. Available now, this 100-percent black cotton T-shirt sports an awesome Bloodlust image on the front, with this quote on the back: "When the sun sets... the hunt is on." This tee comes

in sizes ranging from L-XL for \$16.99.

Be sure to stake one for yourself now!

## SAYONARA BLOODSUCKERS!

Are vampires plaguing your home? Is it impossible to even brush your teeth without getting gnawed upon? Then you need some serious vampire-hunting help, and Fewcore Models has got some in the form of this full-sized statue! Star of the hit anime *Blood The Last Vampire*, Saye stands a whopping 12" tall, sports a real cloth school outfit and stands on her base with a slain Chiropteran at her feet. She hits stores in June, and you can take her home for just \$128! Hey, it's cheaper than a blood transfusion!



## BANDAI BOOTY

Bandai serves up a second trio of spectacular sets based on your favorite anime TV series! Available now for \$19.99 each, these sets of figures consist of two characters and a mecha from the Cartoon Network hit *The Big O* as well as Cowboy Bebop and Pilot Candidate.



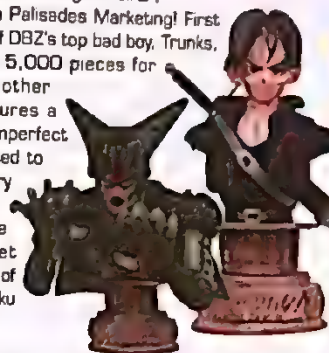
ROBOTECH  
Rick Hunter

## THE HUNT IS ON!

Those beautiful eyes, that dreamy hair...but this ain't no Backstreet Boy were talking about! It's Robotech's Rick Hunter, and now he's available as a 6 1/2" mini-bust from Toynami. Limited to just 2,500 pieces, the Rick Hunter bust is in stores now, and you can make him your dream date for just \$39.99. (And what you guys do in that mecha of Rick's is your secret!)

## BALL BUSTIN'

Check out these two Dragon Ball Z mini-busts from Palisades Marketing! First up is the bust of DBZ's top bad boy, Trunks, limited to just 5,000 pieces for \$49.99. The other mini-bust features a sculpt of the Imperfect Cell, who's limited to just 3,000. Hurry up, since they're both available now (and get ready for a bust of Super Sayan Goku on the way!).



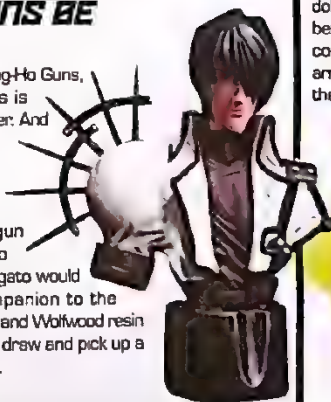
## HUNGRY LIKE THE WOLF

Meet Fusé Kazuki, one of the crack C.A.P.O. troops from the anime movie *Jin-Roh: The Wolf Brigade*. Set in an alternate universe 10 years after World War II, the C.A.P.O.s are heavily armed troops designed to battle the anti-government forces waging chaos on the streets. Fusé stands 5" tall, comes with a variant, helmetless head, features 12 points of articulations and comes with enough weaponry to take out a small country! Look for Fusé in stores now, courtesy of Karyodo, for \$12.99.



## LET TRIGUNS BE BYGONES

The leader of the Gung-Ho Guns, Legato Bluesummers is one cold, deadly mother: And the his icy veneer and merciless scowl is brought to life by Palisades Marketing as a brand-new Trigon mini-bust! Scheduled to hit stores in April, Legato would be the perfect companion to the already-released Vash and Wolfwood resin busts. Bust on the draw and pick up a Legato bust for \$45.



## HOT PICK

### GET TECH EDUCATED

Robotach fans have been holding their breathe waiting for Toynami's Masterpiece Line to hit shelves—and now the wait is over! Scheduled to hit stores in April, the first Masterpiece release is VT-13 Rick Hunter, which transforms from Battloid to Guardian to Fighter. Made of die-cast metal and sturdy plastic, the VT-13 sports tons of cool features (including working LED light and removable pilot) and comes in a collector's box. It'll set you back \$79.99, but move quickly, because it's limited to just 15,000 pieces.



## FUZZY FANTASIES

You might have finished *Final Fantasy X* by now, but it's not finished with you! Straight from Japan come adorable plush dolls of perennial *Final Fantasy* favorites like Chocobo, Tonberry, Cactuar, Cait Sith and more. There'll be 4-inch dolls coming out in March for \$9.99, and then 10-inch dolls arriving in April for 21.99. From Kota Inc./ArtFX. Summon these guys now!

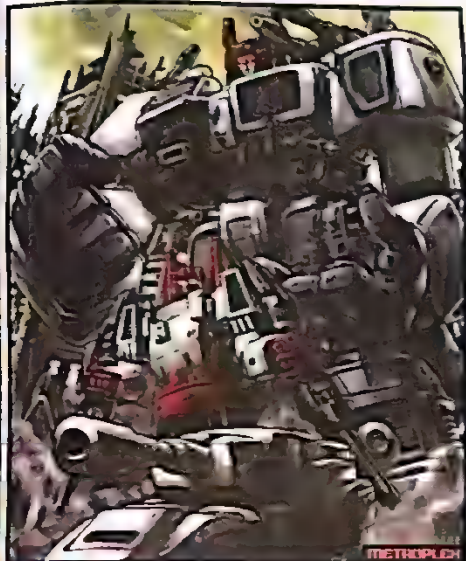






## BOY MEETS ROBOTS

**HOT ARTIST PAT LEE SET TO CONQUER NEW TRANSFORMERS COMIC**



eye. "This has been a dream of mine since I was really young," admits Lee, who's penciling the *Generation One* (G1) series. "I've been a Transformers fan forever!"

It was the fans who pushed Lee to go after the Transformers license. "When we did that *Wizard* centerfold [for *Anime Invasion's* sister pub *Wizard*], the response was so positive that we decided to approach Hasbro with our ideas for a comic series."

Hasbro was definitely interested. A proposal or two later, the robots in disguise were ready to return. The new series promises to include familiar Autobots and Decepticons, but will also contain surprises. Although elements from previous comics and manga incarnations will be present, Lee's working to make Dreamwave's Transformers unique. "Artistically, I'm mixing elements of the toy design and anime along with my personal style. I hope to produce an intense, vibrant, complex and interesting animation-style book."

Joining Lee on this project will be scribe Chris Sammons (*Dark Minds: Macropolis*). The *Generation One* comic book series, based on the initial Transformers characters, will roll out in April, and an ongoing series based on Hasbro's new toys is tentatively scheduled for release in July. ■ JC Continuo



### QUICK READS

#### SUPER-DEFORMED TINY WARRIORS

On the record, look for diminutive versions of your favorite medieval fantasy characters to soon be appearing in a new comic series. About checking out *Shinji* and his pals, look for this war-torn inlet instead.

#### MORE MARVEL MIGHT

Due to the success of Marvel's initial *Ultimate* line, we've heard that the House of Ideas might be adding a few more *Ultimate* manga series. The first, *Ultimate Iron Man*, is set for release in 2002 with the new *Iron Man* comic book series.

#### TRIGUN? TRY SUMMER!

Summer has it that by summer we might see the release of *Trigun* in manga form. There are several interested companies pursuing the rights, and an announcement should be forthcoming citing the company that wins this bidding war. ■ JC



## NUTS FOR 'NAUTS!

**'JOE!' CREATORS BRING BACK MICRONAUTS**

It was a giant toy line and a cult-hit comic. Now, 16 years after the last issue from Marvel was published, *Micronauts* (based on the Japanese property *Microman*) is returning to the comic pages thanks to Devil's Due Productions.



"*Micronauts* is a classic space opera, starring a mismatched group of characters brought together in defiance of the evil Baron Karza. Space Glider, Acroyear and the rest vow to avenge their world and protect Earth," explains Joshua Blaylock, who became involved when the licensors, impressed with his relaunch of the G.I. Joe comic, contacted his company.

"We're revamping it to present-day standards, but retaining everything we feel was important in its history."

Blaylock says. "We'll tie them in with some toys that were left out. We have this cool way that some characters take on the appearance of the toys with the silver faces. Unfortunately, we can't use Arcturus Ramm, Manonette or Bug. But that won't slow us down!" ■ JC

## MANGA BY THE NUMBERS

**13,433** Preorders for *Lone Wolf & Cub Vol. 17: Will of the Fang* TPB

**4,151** Preorders for *Captain Britain* TPB

**25** Amount of years Rumiko Takahashi's (*Ranma 1/2*) been making manga. She's one of the veteran female mangaka in Japan.

**25** Years industry staple Jenette Kahn, president and editor-in-chief of DC Comics has been working in comics.

**301** Pages in *Akira* Volume 8 TPB

**576** Pages in *Essential Ant-Man* TPB

**5** Years it took for *Sailor Moon* merchandise sales to reach \$3 billion

## WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE?

**NEON GENESIS EVANGELION: THE MANGA VS THE ANIME**

Neon Genesis Evangelion (GAINAX), the popular story of teens piloting sentient, robotic-looking Evangelions against alien Angels bent on taking over the world, is fantastic, thrilling and exciting. If you enjoy the *Viz* comics and watch the ADV anime, chances are you noticed a few things just don't... mmh. We noticed 'em, too! Here's some differences.

are a result of the third Angel attacking her, not her own unit.

#### OUT OF CHARACTER...

- Asuka comes across in the manga as quiet and demure—afraid to show her true fiery personality and colors to those around her.
- In the anime, Asuka has no problems from the gogo speaking her piece and knocking anyone in her way on their ass.

#### HOW'D YOU GET THAT BOO-BOO?

- In the anime, we first meet Rei all bandaged and bruised, supposedly because Unit 00 went nuts and she got hurt as a result.
- In the manga, her injuries

insane demolition derby-style driving saves them from the Angel and Unit 00 isn't introduced at all until a few issues later.

#### MONTHLY DEAREST?

- In the anime, Ritsuko's mom is in control of a super-computer that NERV uses. Her spirit is the template for its mainframe.
- In the manga, this isn't mentioned at all.
- In the anime, very late in the series, we discover that part of the soul of Shinji's mom is contained in the

makeup of Unit 01—it's why Shinji bonded so quickly to the Unit. • In the manga we discover this in fifth issue.

#### SECRETS REVEALED

- Vol. 5 of the manga ends with Kaif taking Shinji aside and telling him what he knows about the secrets surrounding the Evangelion units and the Angels.
- This revelation never happened in the anime.





## COMING COMICS

MANGA TO WATCH FOR THIS SPRING!

## MARCH 6

## DRAGON BALL Z PART 5 #3 (Viz)

In his new, 10-foot-tall form, Frieza is more than a match for Vegeta and the heroes. Only Dende's healing power can prevent Kurin and then Gohan from being utterly annihilated. But streaking across the planet at bullet speed is Piccolo, the strongest Namekian ever, with his strength now multiplied by that of the fallen warrior Nail. Akira Toriyama \$2.95

## OH MY GODDESS! PART XI #8: MYSTERY CHILD (Dark Horse Manga)

To prevent his and Belldandy's death, a pink-eyed demon is ready to freeze all time forever! Kuchis steals the means to fix things, but then Belldandy will die with her double. What's a guy to do? Part 6 (of 8) Kazuki Fujishima/Studio Proteus \$3.95

## RANMA 1/2 PART 11 #1 (Viz)

Porcosse Taro returns with a vengeance and he's after Hippo and anyone who stands in his way. He is guarded with the water of his cursed spring, and no one wants to be cursed with that. Rumiko Takahashi \$2.95 U.S.

## MARCH 13

## BASTARD! #4 NINJA! PART 2 OF 3 (Viz)

Dan Schneider and the Metalclan forces break into Ninja Master Gama's stronghold! While the knights of Metalclan fend off a man-eating minotaur, Dan Schneider and Princess Sheila explore the secret, dungeon entrance to the castle, becoming better acquainted in the process. But waiting in the dungeon are terrible monsters—will the two survive? Kazuhiro Higashina MATURE READERS \$3.95

## BLADE OF THE IMMORTAL #55: BEASTS

(Dark Horse Manga)

Hyakum's killed many Ido-ryu swordsmen, but now she and Shirayuki have no place left to run. When the enemy has them backed against a wall with vengeful swords drawn, how can the two hope to escape? Part 1 (of 2) Hiroaki Samura/Studio Proteus MATURE READERS \$2.95

## MARCH 20

## CERES, CELESTIAL LEGEND PART 2 #4 (Viz)

Aya spends the night with Tōya, who is the apple of her eye. But should she really be trusting him? Then Yūki spends the entire evening searching to find Aya and answers. And, what happens when Aya winds up in the most dangerous part of Tokyo? Yū Watanabe \$2.95

## GUNDAM: THE OFFICIAL GUIDE TRADE BOOK (Viz)

Everything you ever wanted to know about Gundam but were too intimidated or afraid to ask is in this comprehensive manual. \$12.95

## INU-YASHA PART 6 #11 (Viz)

Jinryū, a demon cursed for by an old woman, takes on another demon. Is one good, or are they both evil? Also, Kikyo is taken to a castle where a lord with a hidden agenda has summoned her. And when flaming demon remains fall from the sky, it must be a job for Inu-Yasha. Rumiko Takahashi \$2.95

## MARCH 27

## ASTRO BOY VOL. 1 TP (Dark Horse Manga)

Astro Boy was the first manga series to be adapted to animation and became a worldwide phenomenon. Astro Boy is a jet-powered, super-strong, evil-robot-bashing, alien-invasion-smashing powerhouse. Osamu Tezuka/Studio Proteus \$9.95

## POKÉMON ADVENTURES PART 8 #4: SHADOWBOXING GENGAR (Viz)

The battle between the team of Lieutenant Surge and Bill vs. Bruno rages while the super-nerd wakes up and becomes a threat! Meanwhile, the history between Agatha and Professor Oak is discovered. \$4.95

## SUPER MANGA BLAST! #20

(Dark Horse Manga)

Five stories, including installments of: What's Michael? Shadow Star, Seraphic Feather, Club 9 and 3x3 Eyes. Five flavors of your favorite manga in one neat place! Various contributors/Studio Proteus MATURE READERS \$5.99

## APRIL 3

## NADIESICO GRAPHIC NOVEL #3 (CPM Manga)

When Mars is attacked by alien invaders, the United Earth Government desperately orders the creation of a new kind of space battleship, the Nadesico. On Mars, a ragtag crew discovers Nergal's research facility and the legendary Yamato. Kia Asamiya \$15.95

## APRIL 17

## SLAYERS SPECIAL #4 (CPM Manga)

Red Marmo—the gourmand's dream, and Lina and Naga have just gotta have it! After all, Lina may be the most dangerous sorceress in the world and Naga may be beautiful, but that doesn't pay the bills or put food in their mouths. Will they be able to get the Red Marmo? Hajime Kanzaka and Tommy Chitsuka \$2.95

## APRIL 24

## LOVE WOLF AND CUB VOL. 20: A TASTE OF POISON (Dark Horse Manga)

Tired of his head being a fable, attempts to stop Love Wolf and Cub, the shogun sends a master of poison to join the hunt for robin loto Ogami and his little boy Dagoro. Soon the two are surrounded on all sides, facing deadly secret agents, murderously seductive prostitutes and a river of poison flowing all around them! Kazuo Koike and Gossei Kojima MATURE READERS \$9.95

## RECORD OF THE LOOSS WAR: DEEDLIT'S TALE # 8 (CPM Manga)

Pam and Deedlit join the Freedom Knights to aid in the liberation of Kanon. But the Marmo army is hot on their trail, and the only place to escape is the Forest Of No Return. Ryo Mizuno and Masato Natsumoto \$2.95

## OTHER APRIL RELEASES

## FUTABA-KUN CHANGE VOL. 8 #3 (Ironcat)

Finally, Futaba's genetic heritage is explored after his class trip's airplane crashes ashore, only to discover a genetic heritage populace, much to their surprise. As he/she will marry Futaba now that he/she is on the island. Oh, no! Can Misaki and Futaba escape Kun's clutches? MATURE READERS Hiroshi Aro \$2.95

## VAMPIRE YUI VOLUME 4 #3 (Ironcat)

Several combatants enter the human world searching for Yui, only one with her safety in mind. Senju must face the daunting Mr. Kanazaki before he can find Yui. However, Rosa finds Yui first and another battle commences as Yui tries to protect her new friend! Narumi Kakinouchi and Toshihiro Hirano \$2.95

## VAMPIRE PRINCESS MIYU GRAPHIC NOVEL #2 (Ironcat)

Now that Miyu has explored her past and has come to accept her place in the human world, she continues her quest hunting stray Shinmas. Marvel at the beautiful artwork as Miyu faces new enemies, discovering mermaids, possessed dolls and a man with a pair of wings. Narumi Kakinouchi and Toshihiro Hirano \$17.95

## CARDCAPTOR SAKURA #27 (TokyoPop)

Having defeated Yuh, all of the cards are now Sakura's and the world is as it should be. Or is it? Strange things are happening in Tomoeda, and they all seem to be connected—first a dream Sakura can't remember, then a new student comes to her school and finally a strange rain begins. CLAMP \$2.99

## KODOCHA #4 (of 5) (TokyoPop)

Peace finally returns to the war zone of Class 3 when Akito Hayama dukes it out with bratty Gomi and reclaims his title as boss of the sixth grade. But Hayama's victory lap becomes a sulk, and everyone wonders what has the Demon so depressed. When his dark mood turns violent, Sana gets a crazy hunch that her new role in a TV movie may help solve her friend's problems. Miho Oobana and Sarah Dyer \$2.99

## RAGNAROK #3 (of 4) (TokyoPop)

As the Valkyries look in on her trail, Fenris has begun to recover her memory and now has a direction in her quest to find the reincarnation of Balder. Meanwhile, Chas and Ins have defeated the monstrous face worms that were destroying the countryside, and are off to collect their bounties. That is, if the so-called "expert treasure hunter" Lidia doesn't snatch the bounties first. Myung Jin Lee and Richard A. Knaak \$2.99

## COWBOY BEBOP VOLUME ONE (TokyoPop)

What's money between friends? But, wait, who said they were friends? The lone wolf, the wizened vet, the edgy fatale, the smart-mouthed kid—when Spike, Jet, Faye and Vagge get together, it can mean only one thing: carnage is about to ensue. In keeping with the popular but offbeat anime, the manga begins a series of original stories that take the action to a whole new level. Spike, Jet and Faye all end up after the same bounty. Spike goes after a convict who's already in prison and Faye (the con artist she is) ends up the victim of a con not once, but twice. Yutaka Nanten \$9.99

## PARASYTE #10 (TokyoPop)

The Japanese government is now striking back. Shin, one of only two humans to co-exist with a Parasyte, has been recruited to join a military raid on the Parasytes' stronghold. But he's not the only civilian involved—a serial killer who makes Hannibal Lecter look tame has been released from prison to join the assault. H. Ito Iwaiki MATURE READERS \$12.99

## JULINE #5 (TokyoPop)

It's the final battle between the Black Pearl Clan and the Jeweled Mirror, Water Crystal and Ivory Sword clans. But victory cannot be claimed until Juline and her friends, Bakuya, Seika and Kio, face their loved ones, who have become unwilling Guardians of Black Pearl Temple. For the honor of her clan—and for her own life—Juline is forced to fight her father to the death. Narumi Kakinouchi \$12.99

## HARLEM BEAT Vol. 10 (TokyoPop)

Nate and the Johnan High Basketball Team are on their way to the National Championships, so why aren't they celebrating? With exams looming, some key players are worried that their test performances could have them sitting out one of the most important games of their lives. Nate, who's finally proven himself on the court, may be sidelined just as quickly as he found his game. It's time to buckle down and get focused...of course, that's assuming his girl-crazy teammates don't push him off-track. Yuriko Nishiyama \$9.99

## GETTING TO KNOW

## TOMOKO TAMBUCHIN

In the U.S., Tomoko Tamuchin's most recent works *Princess Prince* (CPM Manga) and *Spice House* (Ironcat) are meeting with rising success. Her new CPM Manga series, *Let's Stay Together*, is due out by summer. Tomoko's shy, but we get her to open up a little about manga, anime and chocolate!



## What's your favorite manga?

All of my favorites are manga! I read when I was a high school student. I heard news that my "old" favorite manga *Kinniku Gai* (an epic comedic story from JUMP) would be started again. I'm interested to see it, because the last episode was very strange and controversial.

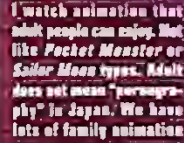


CHOCOLATE

At the end of this epic series, everything that happened was revealed to be a dream!

## What's your favorite snack food at 2 a.m.?

I love chocolate! I love Japanese chocolate, but Cadbury is best in the world. It's expensive, so I can't eat it every day! I love Soda's chocolate in the USA, too. Also potato chips, but they aren't good at 2 a.m.!



COLDWATER

## What kind of anime do you watch?

I watch animation that adult people can enjoy. Not like *Pocket Monster* or *Sailor Moon* types. Adult does not mean "pornography" in Japan. We have lots of family animation even adult people can enjoy like *Digimon*.



## When you get creative blocks, what do you do to overcome them?

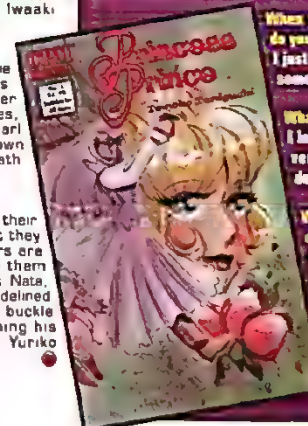
I just try to finish until deadline—sometimes—I just do it.

## What's your favorite animal?

I love all animals. I'm especially very interested in whales and dolphins.

## What do you like the best about creating manga?

I just love drawing and making a character come to life. I've tried some different jobs, but whatever happens, I can't quit creating manga. MJC







# MANGA PRICE GUIDE

WHAT'S HOT, WHAT'S NOT AND WHY

**N**egotiator Roger Smith knows size really does matter. His giant robot named *Big O* may turn out to be one of the great manga successes of 2002, as some retailers are expecting the new *Big O* manga to be a big hit. We talked to retailers around the country to see just what's hot and what's not quite so hot on their manga shelves.

## BASED ON A TV SHOW

The *Big O* debuted just last month, but fan anticipation had been high for months prior. Based on the series aired Stateside on Cartoon Network last year, the manga by Hitoshi Ariga will tie up the anime's many loose ends.

**LONE WOLF AND CUB**



The other likely big hit of the spring is also based on a Cartoon Network import—*Cowboy Bebop*. The further adventures of jazzy bounty hunters Jet, Spike and Faye are drawn



by Yutaka Nanten.

"We've had a lot of people asking about them," said Mike Melve, owner of Atomic Comics in Mesa, Arizona.

Both titles are seeing their sales bolstered by a sort of golden rule of manga sales in America—if it's on TV, it's moving off the comic shop shelves. "The more cross-reference, the better," Melve said. Still-popular manga mainstays *Dragon Ball*, *Dragon Ball Z* and *Sailor Moon* are proof of that.

Of course, there's exceptions to every rule. New mecha melodramas from the *Gundam*-verse continue to invade American airwaves, but consumers aren't as excited about the *Va* comics series as they once were, or as they continue to be with other *Gundam* merchandise.

## SELLING LIKE FISHCAKES

What makes for a strong seller? David Wheeler, owner of Austin, Texas-based shop The Dragon's Lair, cites a classic formula: "Good art and a good story."

Wheeler cites Dark Horse's *Oh My Goddess!*, *Gunsmith Cats*, *Cannon God Exaxxon*, *Nausicaa of the Valley of the Wind*, and *Ceres Celestial Legend*.

## BEHIND EVERY HOT BOOK IS A HOT CREATOR

Consumers follow particular creators as much as particular books. Among the current favorites are shopu creative collective CLAMP, *Fushigi Yugi* creator Yu Watase and master animator (and manga creator) Hayao Miyazaki. Perennial safe bet Rumiko Takahashi is on just about everybody's hot list—particularly for her action-packed romantic comedies *Inu-Yasha* and *Ranma 1/2*. Other super-strong sellers include the huge *Akira* trades ("Akira is really popular, even with the people who don't normally buy manga," said T.D. Stadell of Million Year Picnic in Cambridge, Mass.) and try *Lone Wolf and Cub* collections of big samurai action. "You just get hooked," Stadell said. "They're \$10.45 apiece, and once you buy one you're ready to buy them all."

For questions to J. Caleb Mozzocco or about collecting anime, e-mail us at [AnimelInvasion@aol.com](mailto:AnimelInvasion@aol.com).

<b>BOOK NIGHTS</b> (1987-1991)		<b>PART 2 (1981-PRESENT)</b>		<b>3</b>	
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1-1	1.0	1.1	1.2	1.3	1.4	1.5	1.6	1.7	1.8	1.9	2.0	2.1	2.2	2.3	2.4	2.5	2.6	2.7	2.8	2.9	3.0	3.1	3.2	3.3	3.4	3.5	3.6	3.7	3.8	3.9	4.0	4.1	4.2	4.3	4.4	4.5	4.6	4.7	4.8	4.9	5.0	5.1	5.2	5.3	5.4	5.5	5.6	5.7	5.8	5.9	6.0	6.1	6.2	6.3	6.4	6.5	6.6	6.7	6.8	6.9	7.0	7.1	7.2	7.3	7.4	7.5	7.6	7.7	7.8	7.9	8.0	8.1	8.2	8.3	8.4	8.5	8.6	8.7	8.8	8.9	9.0	9.1	9.2	9.3	9.4	9.5	9.6	9.7	9.8	9.9	10.0																																																																																																			
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1-1	1.0	1.1	1.2	1.3	1.4	1.5	1.6	1.7	1.8	1.9	2.0	2.1	2.2	2.3	2.4	2.5	2.6	2.7	2.8	2.9	3.0	3.1	3.2	3.3	3.4	3.5	3.6	3.7	3.8	3.9	4.0	4.1	4.2	4.3	4.4	4.5	4.6	4.7	4.8	4.9	5.0	5.1	5.2	5.3	5.4	5.5	5.6	5.7	5.8	5.9	6.0	6.1	6.2	6.3	6.4	6.5	6.6	6.7	6.8	6.9	7.0	7.1	7.2	7.3	7.4	7.5	7.6	7.7	7.8	7.9	8.0	8.1	8.2	8.3	8.4	8.5	8.6	8.7	8.8	8.9	9.0	9.1	9.2	9.3	9.4	9.5	9.6	9.7	9.8	9.9	10.0																																																																																																			
1-1																																																																																																				1.0	1.1	1.2	1.3	1.4	1.5	1.6	1.7	1.8	1.9	2.0	2.1	2.2	2.3	2.4	2.5	2.6	2.7	2.8	2.9	3.0	3.1	3.2	3.3	3.4	3.5	3.6	3.7	3.8	3.9	4.0	4.1	4.2	4.3	4.4	4.5	4.6	4.7	4.8	4.9	5.0	5.1	5.2	5.3	5.4	5.5	5.6	5.7	5.8	5.9	6.0	6.1	6.2	6.3	6.4	6.5	6.6	6.7	6.8	6.9	7.0	7.1	7.2	7.3	7.4	7.5	7.6	7.7	7.8	7.9	8.0	8.1	8.2	8.3	8.4	8.5	8.6	8.7	8.8	8.9	9.0	9.1	9.2	9.3	9.4	9.5	9.6	9.7	9.8	9.9	10.0
1-2																																																																																																				1.0	1.1	1.2	1.3	1.4	1.5	1.6	1.7	1.8	1.9	2.0	2.1	2.2	2.3	2.4	2.5	2.6	2.7	2.8	2.9	3.0	3.1	3.2	3.3	3.4	3.5	3.6	3.7	3.8	3.9	4.0	4.1	4.2	4.3	4.4	4.5	4.6	4.7	4.8	4.9	5.0	5.1	5.2	5.3	5.4	5.5	5.6	5.7	5.8	5.9	6.0	6.1	6.2	6.3	6.4	6.5	6.6	6.7	6.8	6.9	7.0	7.1	7.2	7.3	7.4	7.5	7.6	7.7	7.8	7.9	8.0	8.1	8.2	8.3	8.4	8.5	8.6	8.7	8.8	8.9	9.0	9.1	9.2	9.3	9.4	9.5	9.6	9.7	9.8	9.9	10.0
1-3																																																																																																				1.0	1.1	1.2	1.3	1.4	1.5	1.6	1.7	1.8	1.9	2.0	2.1	2.2	2.3	2.4	2.5	2.6	2.7	2.8	2.9	3.0	3.1	3.2	3.3	3.4	3.5	3.6	3.7	3.8	3.9	4.0	4.1	4.2	4.3	4.4	4.5	4.6	4.7	4.8	4.9	5.0	5.1	5.2	5.3	5.4	5.5	5.6	5.7	5.8	5.9	6.0	6.1	6.2	6.3	6.4	6.5	6.6	6.7	6.8	6.9	7.0	7.1	7.2	7.3	7.4	7.5	7.6	7.7	7.8	7.9	8.0	8.1	8.2	8.3	8.4	8.5	8.6	8.7	8.8	8.9	9.0	9.1	9.2	9.3	9.4	9.5	9.6	9.7	9.8	9.9	10.0
1-4																																																																																																				1.0	1.1	1.2	1.3	1.4	1.5	1.6	1.7	1.8	1.9	2.0	2.1	2.2	2.3	2.4	2.5	2.6	2.7	2.8	2.9	3.0	3.1	3.2	3.3	3.4	3.5	3.6	3.7	3.8	3.9	4.0	4.1	4.2	4.3	4.4	4.5	4.6	4.7	4.8	4.9	5.0	5.1	5.2	5.3	5.4	5.5	5.6	5.7	5.8	5.9	6.0	6.1	6.2	6.3	6.4	6.5	6.6	6.7	6.8	6.9	7.0	7.1	7.2	7.3	7.4	7.5	7.6	7.7	7.8	7.9	8.0	8.1	8.2	8.3	8.4	8.5	8.6	8.7	8.8	8.9	9.0	9.1	9.2	9.3	9.4	9.5	9.6	9.7	9.8	9.9	10.0
1-5																																																																																																				1.0	1.1	1.2	1.3	1.4	1.5	1.6	1.7	1.8	1.9	2.0	2.1	2.2	2.3	2.4	2.5	2.6	2.7	2.8	2.9	3.0	3.1	3.2	3.3	3.4	3.5	3.6	3.7	3.8	3.9	4.0	4.1	4.2	4.3	4.4	4.5	4.6	4.7	4.8	4.9	5.0	5.1	5.2	5.3	5.4	5.5	5.6	5.7	5.8	5.9	6.0	6.1	6.2	6.3	6.4	6.5	6.6	6.7	6.8	6.9	7.0	7.1	7.2	7.3	7.4	7.5	7.6	7.7	7.8	7.9	8.0	8.1	8.2	8.3	8.4	8.5	8.6	8.7	8.8	8.9	9.0	9.1	9.2	9.3	9.4	9.5	9.6	9.7	9.8	9.9	10.0
1-6																																																																																																				1.0	1.1	1.2	1.3	1.4	1.5	1.6	1.7	1.8	1.9	2.0	2.1	2.2	2.3	2.4	2.5	2.6	2.7	2.8	2.9	3.0	3.1	3.2	3.3	3.4	3.5	3.6	3.7	3.8	3.9	4.0	4.1	4.2	4.3	4.4	4.5	4.6	4.7	4.8	4.9	5.0	5.1	5.2	5.3	5.4	5.5	5.6	5.7	5.8	5.9	6.0	6.1	6.2	6.3	6.4	6.5	6.6	6.7	6.8	6.9	7.0	7.1	7.2	7.3	7.4	7.5	7.6	7.7	7.8	7.9	8.0	8.1	8.2	8.3	8.4	8.5	8.6	8.7	8.8	8.9	9.0	9.1	9.2	9.3	9.4	9.5	9.6	9.7	9.8	9.9	10.0
1-7																																																																																																				1.0	1.1	1.2	1.3	1.4	1.5	1.6	1.7	1.8	1.9	2.0	2.1	2.2	2.3	2.4	2.5	2.6	2.7	2.8	2.9	3.0	3.1	3.2	3.3	3.4	3.5	3.6	3.7	3.8	3.9	4.0	4.1	4.2	4.3	4.4	4.5	4.6	4.7	4.8	4.9	5.0	5.1	5.2	5.3	5.4	5.5	5.6	5.7	5.8	5.9	6.0	6.1	6.2	6.3	6.4	6.5	6.6	6.7	6.8	6.9	7.0	7.1	7.2	7.3	7.4	7.5	7.6	7.7	7.8	7.9	8.0	8.1	8.2	8.3	8.4	8.5	8.6	8.7	8.8	8.9	9.0	9.1	9.2	9.3	9.4	9.5	9.6	9.7	9.8	9.9	10.0
1-8																																																																																																				1.0	1.1	1.2	1.3	1.4	1.5	1.6	1.7	1.8	1.9	2.0	2.1	2.2	2.3	2.4	2.5	2.6	2.7	2.8	2.9	3.0	3.1	3.2	3.3	3.4	3.5	3.6	3.7	3.8	3.9	4.0	4.1	4.2	4.3	4.4	4.5	4.6	4.7	4.8	4.9	5.0	5.1	5.2	5.3	5.4	5.5	5.6	5.7	5.8	5.9	6.0	6.1	6.2	6.3	6.4	6.5	6.6	6.7	6.8	6.9	7.0	7.1	7.2	7.3	7.4	7.5	7.6	7.7	7.8	7.9	8.0	8.1	8.2	8.3	8.4	8.5	8.6	8.7	8.8	8.9	9.0	9.1	9.2	9.3	9.4	9.5	9.6	9.7	9.8	9.9	10.0
1-9																																																																																																				1.0	1.1	1.2	1.3	1.4	1.5	1.6	1.7	1.8	1.9	2.0	2.1	2.2	2.3	2.4	2.5	2.6	2.7	2.8	2.9	3.0	3.1	3.2	3.3	3.4	3.5	3.6	3.7	3.8	3.9	4.0	4.1	4.2	4.3	4.4	4.5	4.6	4.7	4.8	4.9	5.0	5.1	5.2	5.3	5.4	5.5	5.6	5.7	5.8	5.9	6.0	6.1	6.2	6.3	6.4	6.5	6.6	6.7	6.8	6.9	7.0	7.1	7.2	7.3	7.4	7.5	7.6	7.7	7.8	7.9	8.0	8.1	8.2	8.3	8.4	8.5	8.6	8.7	8.8	8.9	9.0	9.1	9.2	9.3	9.4	9.5	9.6	9.7	9.8	9.9	10.0
1-10																																																																																																				1.0	1.1	1.2	1.3	1.4	1.5	1.6	1.7	1.8	1.9	2.0	2.1	2.2	2.3	2.4	2.5	2.6	2.7	2.8	2.9	3.0	3.1	3.2	3.3	3.4	3.5	3.6	3.7	3.8	3.9	4.0	4.1	4.2	4.3	4.4	4.5	4.6	4.7	4.8	4																																																			

# THE TOP 30

COOLEST MANGA CHARACTERS OF ALL TIME

BY GUY AUM

## 30. DEEDIEG

RECORD OF THE LOOSS WAR  
OPM Manga

Deedie is a 16th kid from the forest of the Fantasy World who is a member of the 100th Division. He is a 16th kid who is a member of the 10



# THE TOP 30

COOLEST MANGA CHARACTERS OF ALL TIME



## 25. Hōsaru Gendō / Sailor Saturn

**COOL** (1991-1997)  
PART 1 (1991-1994)  
PART 2 (1994-1997)  
TRADE PAPERBACKS  
1. 1991-1994  
2. 1994-1997  
3. 1997-1998  
4. 1998-1999  
5. 1999-2000  
6. 2000-2001  
7. 2001-2002  
8. 2002-2003  
9. 2003-2004  
10. 2004-2005  
11. 2005-2006  
12. 2006-2007  
13. 2007-2008  
14. 2008-2009  
15. 2009-2010  
16. 2010-2011  
17. 2011-2012  
18. 2012-2013  
19. 2013-2014  
20. 2014-2015  
21. 2015-2016  
22. 2016-2017  
23. 2017-2018  
24. 2018-2019  
25. 2019-2020  
26. 2020-2021  
27. 2021-2022  
28. 2022-2023  
29. 2023-2024  
30. 2024-2025



## 24. Rei Ayanami

**COOL** (1995-1996)  
PART 1 (1995-1996)  
TRADE PAPERBACKS  
1. 1995-1996  
2. 1996-1997  
3. 1997-1998  
4. 1998-1999  
5. 1999-2000  
6. 2000-2001  
7. 2001-2002  
8. 2002-2003  
9. 2003-2004  
10. 2004-2005  
11. 2005-2006  
12. 2006-2007  
13. 2007-2008  
14. 2008-2009  
15. 2009-2010  
16. 2010-2011  
17. 2011-2012  
18. 2012-2013  
19. 2013-2014  
20. 2014-2015  
21. 2015-2016  
22. 2016-2017  
23. 2017-2018  
24. 2018-2019  
25. 2019-2020  
26. 2020-2021  
27. 2021-2022  
28. 2022-2023  
29. 2023-2024  
30. 2024-2025



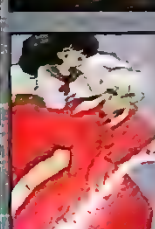
## 23. Alita

**COOL** (1991-1992)  
PART 1 (1991-1992)  
TRADE PAPERBACKS  
1. 1991-1992  
2. 1992-1993  
3. 1993-1994  
4. 1994-1995  
5. 1995-1996  
6. 1996-1997  
7. 1997-1998  
8. 1998-1999  
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16. 2006-2007  
17. 2007-2008  
18. 2008-2009  
19. 2009-2010  
20. 2010-2011  
21. 2011-2012  
22. 2012-2013  
23. 2013-2014  
24. 2014-2015  
25. 2015-2016  
26. 2016-2017  
27. 2017-2018  
28. 2018-2019  
29. 2019-2020  
30. 2020-2021



## 22. X-1000

**COOL** (1989-1990)  
PART 1 (1989-1990)  
TRADE PAPERBACKS  
1. 1989-1990  
2. 1990-1991  
3. 1991-1992  
4. 1992-1993  
5. 1993-1994  
6. 1994-1995  
7. 1995-1996  
8. 1996-1997  
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14. 2002-2003  
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16. 2004-2005  
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18. 2006-2007  
19. 2007-2008  
20. 2008-2009  
21. 2009-2010  
22. 2010-2011  
23. 2011-2012  
24. 2012-2013  
25. 2013-2014  
26. 2014-2015  
27. 2015-2016  
28. 2016-2017  
29. 2017-2018  
30. 2018-2019



## 21. Inu-Yasha

**COOL** (1997-1998)  
PART 1 (1997-1998)  
TRADE PAPERBACKS  
1. 1997-1998  
2. 1998-1999  
3. 1999-2000  
4. 2000-2001  
5. 2001-2002  
6. 2002-2003  
7. 2003-2004  
8. 2004-2005  
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11. 2007-2008  
12. 2008-2009  
13. 2009-2010  
14. 2010-2011  
15. 2011-2012  
16. 2012-2013  
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18. 2014-2015  
19. 2015-2016  
20. 2016-2017  
21. 2017-2018  
22. 2018-2019  
23. 2019-2020  
24. 2020-2021  
25. 2021-2022  
26. 2022-2023  
27. 2023-2024  
28. 2024-2025

CHARACTER	COOL
CELESTIAL EREWOD	1.0
CHANGE COMMANDER BOSS	1.0
CHIVALRY	1.0
COBRA	1.0
COMBAT-METAL	1.0
CRYING FREEMAN	1.0
CYBER 7	1.0
CYBER CITY	1.0
DAI KAMIKAZE	1.0
DANCE TILL TOMORROW	1.0
DARK ANGEL	1.0
DEADLY CURVE	1.0
DEVILMAN	1.0

CHARACTER	COOL
DIRTY PAIR	1.0
DIRTY PAIR PART 2	1.0
DIRTY PAIR PART 3	1.0
DIRTY PAIR PART 4	1.0
DIRTY PAIR PART 5	1.0
DIRTY PAIR PART 6	1.0
DIRTY PAIR PART 7	1.0
DIRTY PAIR PART 8	1.0
DIRTY PAIR PART 9	1.0
DIRTY PAIR PART 10	1.0
DIRTY PAIR PART 11	1.0
DIRTY PAIR PART 12	1.0
DIRTY PAIR PART 13	1.0
DIRTY PAIR PART 14	1.0
DIRTY PAIR PART 15	1.0
DIRTY PAIR PART 16	1.0
DIRTY PAIR PART 17	1.0
DIRTY PAIR PART 18	1.0
DIRTY PAIR PART 19	1.0
DIRTY PAIR PART 20	1.0
DIRTY PAIR PART 21	1.0
DIRTY PAIR PART 22	1.0
DIRTY PAIR PART 23	1.0
DIRTY PAIR PART 24	1.0
DIRTY PAIR PART 25	1.0
DIRTY PAIR PART 26	1.0
DIRTY PAIR PART 27	1.0
DIRTY PAIR PART 28	1.0
DIRTY PAIR PART 29	1.0
DIRTY PAIR PART 30	1.0

CHARACTER	COOL
DIRTY PAIR PART 31	1.0
DIRTY PAIR PART 32	1.0
DIRTY PAIR PART 33	1.0
DIRTY PAIR PART 34	1.0
DIRTY PAIR PART 35	1.0
DIRTY PAIR PART 36	1.0
DIRTY PAIR PART 37	1.0
DIRTY PAIR PART 38	1.0
DIRTY PAIR PART 39	1.0
DIRTY PAIR PART 40	1.0
DIRTY PAIR PART 41	1.0
DIRTY PAIR PART 42	1.0
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DIRTY PAIR PART 44	1.0
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DIRTY PAIR PART 46	1.0
DIRTY PAIR PART 47	1.0
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DIRTY PAIR PART 49	1.0
DIRTY PAIR PART 50	1.0
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DIRTY PAIR PART 54	1.0
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DIRTY PAIR PART 56	1.0
DIRTY PAIR PART 57	1.0
DIRTY PAIR PART 58	1.0
DIRTY PAIR PART 59	1.0
DIRTY PAIR PART 60	1.0

CHARACTER	COOL
DIRTY PAIR PART 61	1.0
DIRTY PAIR PART 62	1.0
DIRTY PAIR PART 63	1.0
DIRTY PAIR PART 64	1.0
DIRTY PAIR PART 65	1.0
DIRTY PAIR PART 66	1.0
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DIRTY PAIR PART 86	1.0
DIRTY PAIR PART 87	1.0
DIRTY PAIR PART 88	1.0
DIRTY PAIR PART 89	1.0
DIRTY PAIR PART 90	1.0

CHARACTER	COOL
DIRTY PAIR PART 91	1.0
DIRTY PAIR PART 92	1.0
DIRTY PAIR PART 93	1.0
DIRTY PAIR PART 94	1.0
DIRTY PAIR PART 95	1.0
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DIRTY PAIR PART 118	1.0
DIRTY PAIR PART 119	1.0
DIRTY PAIR PART 120	1.0

CHARACTER	COOL
DIRTY PAIR PART 121	1.0
DIRTY PAIR PART 122	1.0
DIRTY PAIR PART 123	1.0
DIRTY PAIR PART 124	1.0
DIRTY PAIR PART 125	1.0
DIRTY PAIR PART 126	1.0
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DIRTY PAIR PART 146	1.0
DIRTY PAIR PART 147	1.0
DIRTY PAIR PART 148	1.0
DIRTY PAIR PART 149	1.0
DIRTY PAIR PART 150	1.0

CHARACTER	COOL
DIRTY PAIR PART 151	1.0
DIRTY PAIR PART 152	1.0
DIRTY PAIR PART 153	1.0
DIRTY PAIR PART 154	1.0
DIRTY PAIR PART 155	1.0
DIRTY PAIR PART 156	1.0
DIRTY PAIR PART 157	1.0
DIRTY PAIR PART 158	1.0
DIRTY PAIR PART 159	1.0
DIRTY PAIR PART 160	1.0
DIRTY PAIR PART 161	1.0
DIRTY PAIR PART 162	1.0
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# THE TOP 30

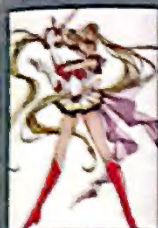
## COOLEST MANGA CHARACTERS OF ALL TIME



### 15. AKAHI TORIYAMA

Original Creator, Viz

After Shonen-ai is always chasing after one girl or another—much to his wife's regret. He's a hopeless flirt and dreams of his own harem, and even though he's the true object of his affection, he's just too shy to admit it. Being behind one-liners and puns, he's a comic book, but he's not for the faint of heart. **EMBARRASSING SECRET:** Gets all his dating tips from Saturday Night Live's "Ladies Men."



### 14. SAITAMA

Saitama, One Punch Man, Shounen

Fighting as if he's a normal guy, Saitama is the coolest character in the world. He's a normal guy, but when the going gets tough, he gets the urge to run, and when he's alone and even the job finish. Even when he's almost petrified with fear, Saitama's willing to face his own safety and protect his friends and the world. She's a Princess with a punch! **EMBARRASSING SECRET:** She can fight to save the world, but can't conjugate verbs to save her life.



### 13. GOKU

Dragon Ball, Shounen, Viz and Tokyopop

Don't be the 15-year-old pilot of Dragon Ball. He's a master of stealth operations, but is almost battle he makes his presence known with wild antics and loud, boisterous comments. He doesn't back down and isn't afraid of much. He's also a little crazy—after all, he believes himself to be the "god of death." **EMBARRASSING SECRET:** God of Death wasn't his first choice. He wanted to be the God of Vices, but that title was already taken.



### 12. YUI

Vampire Princess Yui, Studio Brains

Part vampire, part Shi (another supernatural element) Yui is the love of some Shi existence and has many enemies. She gets magic power from cherry blossom trees and the lake she protects, and she's powerful enough to summon its original guardian. Yui's not a total still—she likes to laugh and have fun—but also honors her obligations to family, friends, and tradition. **EMBARRASSING SECRET:** Enjoys watching Buffy the Vampire Slayer; thinks Riley is "hot."



### 11. KANAEDA

K-On!, Dark Horse Manga

Riding a motorcycle cooler than anything he's ever. Even Kanaeda or Lulu could own dreams of owning. Kanaeda's one bad stuff: He's a punk, loyal to his friends, tenacious and clever—where he needs to be. He's the leader of a pack of tough teens working in a world that makes him feel like a "misfit." **EMBARRASSING SECRET:** Love of Kanaeda is not just a love of music, but a love of the new music scene, being punk.

Rank	Character	Score
1	Yui	10.0
2	Saitama	9.5
3	Goku	9.0

Rank	Character	Score
4	Akahi Toriyama	8.5
5	Yui	8.0
6	Saitama	7.5

Rank	Character	Score
7	Akahi Toriyama	7.0
8	Yui	6.5
9	Saitama	6.0

Rank	Character	Score
10	Akahi Toriyama	5.5
11	Yui	5.0
12	Saitama	4.5

Rank	Character	Score
13	Akahi Toriyama	4.0
14	Yui	3.5
15	Saitama	3.0

Rank	Character	Score
16	Akahi Toriyama	2.5
17	Yui	2.0
18	Saitama	1.5

Rank	Character	Score
19	Akahi Toriyama	1.0
20	Yui	0.5
21	Saitama	0.0

Rank	Character	Score
22	Akahi Toriyama	0.0
23	Yui	0.0
24	Saitama	0.0

Rank	Character	Score
25	Akahi Toriyama	0.0
26	Yui	0.0
27	Saitama	0.0

Rank	Character	Score
28	Akahi Toriyama	0.0
29	Yui	0.0
30	Saitama	0.0

Rank	Character	Score
31	Akahi Toriyama	0.0
32	Yui	0.0
33	Saitama	0.0

Rank	Character	Score
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35	Yui	0.0
36	Saitama	0.0

Rank	Character	Score
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38	Yui	0.0
39	Saitama	0.0

Rank	Character	Score
40	Akahi Toriyama	0.0
41	Yui	0.0
42	Saitama	0.0

Rank	Character	Score
43	Akahi Toriyama	0.0
44	Yui	0.0
45	Saitama	0.0

Rank	Character	Score
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48	Saitama	0.0

Rank	Character	Score
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50	Yui	0.0
51	Saitama	0.0

Rank	Character	Score
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Rank	Character	Score
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Rank	Character	Score
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66	Saitama	0.0

Rank	Character	Score
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68	Yui	0.0
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Rank	Character	Score
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Rank	Character	Score
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75	Saitama	0.0

Rank	Character	Score
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Rank	Character	Score
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80	Yui	0.0
81	Saitama	0.0

Rank	Character	Score
82	Akahi Toriyama	0.0
83	Yui	0.0
84	Saitama	0.0

Rank	Character	Score
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87	Saitama	0.0

Rank	Character	Score
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Rank	Character	Score
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Rank	Character	Score
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95	Yui	0.0
96	Saitama	0.0

Rank	Character	Score
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98	Yui	0.0
99	Saitama	0.0

Rank	Character	Score
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Rank	Character	Score
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Rank	Character	Score
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147	Saitama	0.0

Rank	Character	Score
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150	Saitama	0.0

Rank	Character	Score
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Rank	Character	Score
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Rank	Character	Score
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159	Saitama	0.0

Rank	Character	Score
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161	Yui	0.0
162	Saitama	0.0

Rank	Character	Score
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164	Yui	0.0
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Rank	Character	Score
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167	Yui	0.0
168	Saitama	0.0

Rank	Character	Score
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Rank	Character	Score
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Rank	Character	Score
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Rank	Character	Score
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209	Yui	0.0
210	Saitama	0.0

Rank	Character	Score
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212	Yui	0.0
213	Saitama	0.0

Rank	Character	Score
214	Akahi Toriyama	0.0
215	Yui	0.0
216	Saitama	0.0

Rank	Character	Score
217	Akahi Toriyama	0.0
218	Yui	0.0
219	Saitama	0.0

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PROJECT A-NO 3	CPM BRAND (1993)	1.00



# THE TOP 30

COOLEST MANGA CHARACTERS OF ALL TIME



**5. BELLBOBBY**  
On My Mark, Dark Horse Manga  
Bellbobby's an innocent, polite, soft-spoken, honest gambler and the Present First Class. When Keichi accidentally steals his number instead of the take-out food, she appears and offers him any wish. The team thinks it's a joke and wishes she'd stay with him forever. He's careful what you wish for! But one to which her duties, Bellbobby reached up her year and moved into case Keichi. **EMBARRASSING SECRET:** Before working on the Double Line she was a teleoperator. "Shubler"



**4. GOKU**  
Dragon Ball, Viz  
Originally Gola, a Super-Saiyan warrior, was sent to Earth to kill everyone and prepare the planet for its new owners. An accident left him with amnesia and, instead of destroying the world, he became one of its greatest fighters. He fights to keep some powerful Dragon Balls out of evil hands. **EMBARRASSING SECRET:** When Chi-Chi asked him if he wanted to get married, he thought "married" was some kind of take-out food.



**3. MOTOKO KUSANAGI**  
Ghost in the Shell, Dark Horse Manga  
She's an officer at the Security Police Section 9. She has a human brain housed inside a full cyber body that'd make the Terminator turn green with envy—or at least turn a little! Together with a security team of cyborgs and humans, they protect society from terrorists of the information age. **EMBARRASSING SECRET:** Once confused alive all her maker all, used some, and cleaned out the wrong pipe! Wtf!



**2. OGAMI ITTO**  
Lone Wolf and Cub, Dark Horse Manga  
The shogun's executioner, Ogami Itto was entrusted to bring swift justice to those ordered to commit suicide. Now, framed for the murder of his wife, he's a wandering assassin, stripped of his land and title. With his infant son by his side, he searches for the people who ruined him. He is the Lone Wolf, with Cub. **EMBARRASSING SECRET:** He has the same nickname as Lenny from Lawrence and Harvey.



**1. NAUSICAA**  
Nausicaä of the Valley of the Wind, Viz  
Nausicaä's the 10-year-old Princess of the Valley of the Wind. She's a powerful, strong-willed and cute as a button. She's also strong-willed, being kept from joining missions from destroying the world and their dying planet. Nausicaä has sympathy for all living things and is an expert at talking to them. She's been to the Valley of the Wind. **EMBARRASSING SECRET:** Her Prince is the Valley of the Wind.

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SHADOW LADY  
Dark Horse (1999-2000)

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# INVASION PROFILE

## ESCAFLOWNE'S HITOMI KANZAKI



### Eye of the Beholder

"Hitomi" means "eye" or "pupil" in Japanese, hinting at Hitomi's ability to see into the future with her inner eye.

### Love Triangles

It wouldn't be anime without a love triangle! There's Hitomi and Van and Allen, Hitomi and catgirl Merie and Van, and Hitomi and Princess Milena and Allen.

### Kings Only

Only the King of Fanelia can pilot the Escaplowne, the most famous Mecha in Gaia, seen left.

### In the Cards

With the mysterious pendant given to her by her grandmother, Hitomi receives dark visions of the future while in Gaia, and her tarot deck readings are extremely accurate.

### On Track

Hitomi's a track star back in Japan, which means she's fit and ready for the adventures to come. At least once, her incredible long-jump skills save the day—as well as Van's life.

**ORIGIN:** Hitomi Kanzaki is a typical Japanese schoolgirl with a gift for reading fortunes with her tarot deck. Her life changes forever when a magic pendant sweeps her to a fantastic world named Gaia, where knights battle in giant steam-powered robots, and fire-breathing dragons haunt the skies—a world where Earth is known as the Mystic Moon. Befriended by the young prince Van Foel and the dashing knight Allen Schezar, she soon finds herself drawn into a war between a massive empire and small peripheral kingdoms—a conflict in which her mystical skills may tilt the scales of fate.

**NOW APPEARING:** Escaplowne ran on the Fox Kids Network in the United States and YTV in Canada during 2001. If you want to check out all the giant medieval robot action, Bandai Entertainment has collected the series on eight DVDs for \$29.98 apiece—or eight VHS tapes for \$29.98 subbed and \$19.98 dubbed. The high fantasy of the Escaplowne TV series went steamy in the new Escaplowne: A Girl in Gaia feature film, released in Japan last summer and now arriving to various North American distributors!

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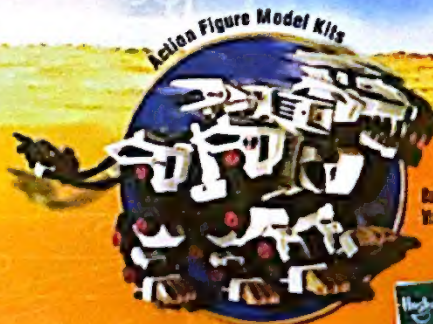
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